

THE HOLY QURAN

A TRANSLATION WITH COMMENTARY

According to Shia Traditions and Principles.

SERIES NO. 64

PART II.

Surahs III, IV and V, with Introduction.

BY

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PART II

PREFACE.

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Five years, five long, long, years—very long at least to my Shia readers, who are now bitterly complaining of it, and particularly so to the Madrasah people who initiated the work—have elapsed since the publication of the first volume of this Commentary on the Holy Quran and apology is certainly due for so much delay. I must confess that much as that has been due to a most exacting and worrying profession the main reason for it is my diffidence. Before I emerge again from the slums of the underworld in which it is my lot to work, and appear again as an author, I desire to know what effect my previous literary enterprise, the first volume of the Commentary had on the readers. The book was very ambitious in this respect that though representing the thoughts and traditions of well over a thousand years it attempted to show them to be truths, acceptable, in fact inescapable, to all men, of any amount of culture, with the sole reservation that many things depending wholly or mainly on inspired teaching it is this latter alone that is arguable. Such a work, if it has mistakes—they must be of a very radical nature, and if there have been flaws of this kind or deficiency of exposition making it unacceptable to any class of readers—for like Islam this book is meant for all—it is useless to go on piling volumes upon volumes. The volume offered was a fairly complete sample of the work to be presented.

Needless to say, by readers I do not mean my fellow-believing Shia readers, whose general appreciation has led to this harrowing impatience for the appearance of this and succeeding volumes. If the book was at all meant for them, it was for those among them, who got into doubts and perplexities, and could not clear them in their own circles. The book was mainly meant for non-Muslims and for non-Shia readers among Musalmans, as a sincere effort to make them understand our ways of thinking, and to invite them to a discussion, if they set any value to serious enquiry about religious truth.

In a country like India where there is so much commendable spirit of religious controversy—commendable, I say, in spite of its invariably getting into bitterness, mud-slinging and vituperation—the book was expected to get some measure of criticism which could not but have been useful in the elucidation of truth,—and, what is so important for an amateur writer like myself, to help me in correcting my mistakes and

short-comings and make the succeeding volumes better and more useful. As it is, not a scrap of criticism has appeared all these five years, not even from the Sunnis, not even from the turbulent Qadiani press, whose Commentary was freely attacked therein. In a country like India where religious sentiment is so strong and susceptibilities so keen it is certainly no small thing for a writer on controversial religious subjects. But it is useless, and this stony silence has been most oppressive to me. Even if the book were merely boring and crazy to them, and so considered beneath notice, the very high quarter from which it is issued ought to have induced some to devote a line or two to its criticism. And I know that the Madrasah people have sedulously been doing all they can to make it reach all classes of readers.

So far only two sorts of general remarks have been heard from some quarters. One is that portions of it are rather too advanced for ordinary readers, assume too much knowledge on the part of the readers, of various sciences—of their latest and highest developments at that. It is very difficult, indeed, for me either to avoid these altogether, or to give more than a reference to the realities investigated and theories developed. However, every class of readers have a right to demand service and I will try to be more expository in these higher scientific and philosophical matters to the best of my ability. It is my conviction that the modern sciences have given a degree of strength to the claim of Islam as a Divine religion that it never had before. They afford the most direct evidences of the Inspiration of the Prophet and Imams, which is simply the essence of our religion. For this reason I gave a large number of instances in the Introduction; yet even in this easily debatable matter there has not been a shadow of criticism.

Also those who regard—wrongly I think—the ultimate problems of philosophy as a necessary prerequisite for a serious religious enquiry, and in the result, turning away from their obscurities, are led to maintain a cautious, sceptical attitude towards such things as Personal or Superpersonal God, life after death, spiritual world generally, will be helped, more than they can imagine, in their life of faith, if instead of mere spinings of thought, as in the older metaphysics, they resort to the more recent philosophy based on the studies in higher physics, biology and psychology. Thus for an all-intelligent, Personal or Superpersonal Creator we have advanced far beyond the common rational arguments. The inner-most constitution of Nature reveals a super-mathematical logicity, making such a free use of $\sqrt{-1}$ in its operations, that can only

be explained on the supposition that it is governed by and permeated with an Intelligence that is higher than our very conception of intelligence. The scientific evidence for some form of a spiritual world in general, and of life after death in particular, is so powerful that only the most ignorant can shut their eyes to it. For an introduction, for an inducement to serious religious enquiry, this is sufficient. There we expect, not all obscurities to be cleared, for that would require to transcend our limits, but a satisfaction about the correctness of these inferences based on the authority of inspired teaching, the inspiration of which is claimed to be established by facts,—of various kinds, *one* of which is the scientific verification of facts about Nature which were beyond the possibility of knowledge to those who taught them.

Thus for its strength Islam does not depend on the acute penetrations of the metaphysicians, nor on the intuitions of mystics claiming to be specially gifted, nor on the faith of men having an extraordinary power of will to believe. Its strength consists in simple direct knowledge evidence of its one distinctive tenet—the Inspiration of the Prophet and the Imams. This doctrine can never be wholly and conclusively proved by showing the reasonability of their teachings, whether philosophical or moral, for who does not know the endless disputes about many of such questions? Still less can it be proved wholly and conclusively by the apparently superhuman saintliness of a man's life, for that lends itself most easily to all sorts of delusions, and in practical life it is easy to read sinister motives &c. in everything. All these things are very important in their own way, but it is equally important to keep an open mind with regard to these things, and not to be led away by our predispositions and prejudices; and it is this which it is most difficult for men to do. I am simply disgusted with endless discussions about Polygamy, Slavery, Jihad, Taqiya and so forth. No one can have an outlook of the whole world and all its future to be able to pronounce definitely on the value or otherwise of such things. If we can establish the inspiration of those who permitted them, it will be sufficient if they can even barely be reconciled to reason, how much more if they can be seen to be thoroughly reasonable, as millions think that they are. Drawbacks and difficulties are sure to appear in one-sided and limited views of things. It is highly presumptuous to set so great a value to our opinions as to refuse to consider positive evidences on their account. So it is very important that our opinions about such debatable things should not be allowed to enter as an element in our enquiry about the inspiration, which can only be safely done on purely scientific lines.

I have been led to a very wide digression. The reason is that to me it seems all important to come to an agreement regarding lines of religious enquiry ; all the trouble is due to the neglect of this, which seems simply disgraceful on the part of intelligent men, in this twentieth century. As in all other things truth comes out on a comprehensive view of things. Each little thing may by itself be insufficient to produce conviction, or may by itself create a difficulty, but taken all together the supposed difficulties may vanish or cease to have importance, and firmest conviction may be arrived at.

The other criticism is from men who want a simple, easily intelligible creed of practical men, not over-burdened, as current Islam is, with hundreds and thousands of beliefs based almost entirely on traditional authority, which to them is sometimes obscure. This book does not help them to disburden themselves of these ignorant and superstitious-looking beliefs, which they cannot bring themselves over to regard as real teaching of Islam. The works of Muslim reformers, Syed Ahmed Khan, and others, are valued chiefly for this. Or Islam can be taken to be a progressive cult, not a final word of truth, and we can discard unacceptable teachings, whether as a result of higher revelation, or irrespective of it, as with ordinary rationalists. There is a tendency to separate the essential from the nonessential in religion, the former having real moral and philosophical value, the latter merely bound up with it in common authority, and of value merely for the spirit of obedience, which seeks to govern not only conduct but also to permeate and—say it frankly—override our reason and intellect. Now Islam is very liberal in this matter. By no means do we preach that except in the case of the cardinal principles of Islam, based on clear teachings of the Quran and innumerable traditions of the Prophet, all that we teach and hold to be sacred tradition is truth ; we only say that it appears so on the traditional authority we have, and so should be believed, or at least not rejected, without thorough enquiry about the traditional basis. We know that much of this will be changed in the days of Our Lord Mahdi of Islam and we should keep an open mind to change it any day. In my note on Sura 1, verse 5, I have said that this is specially meant in that verse. It would be a great fortune if we could cast off some of our errors to-day, and we should strive to do so to the best of our ability. Our only submission is that this should be done after careful conscientious historical criticism, and not in an easy devil-may-care way. And particularly this purely historical enquiry should be kept apart from our opinions regarding the subject matter. Some are so carried

away by what appears to them as the inherent improbability of the thing that they would look to no evidence as to its being the teaching of the Prophet. The two questions, the moral and the historical, must be kept wholly apart; we can have our say on either separately, but with those who mix them up there is no common ground for discussion. The non-Muslims are better than many Musalmans in this respect. They will keep the two questions separate and we have to see whether on the evidence we can produce for the Inspiration of the Prophet and Imams we can give it sufficient strength to support all these beliefs on their authority. If we can, then current Islam wins, otherwise it falls, and our prayer is that whichever of the two it deserves it may come off as speedily as possible to the agreement of all men. Amen!

There have been two movements recently to free the Musalmans from the yoke of traditionalism. Bahaism disputes the finality of Islam and is now a full-fledged new creed of its own. The Ahmadi movement is more timorous. It seeks to make Islam as elastic as possible by disputing finality in the interpretation of Islamic teachings. Both were outdone by the multifarious incoherent schools of Sufis in old times with only a shadowy respect for right lines of enquiry and evidence in anything. It is unfortunate that for so many centuries people cannot agree on the mere logic of religious enquiry. How can we expect the non-Muslims to come to agreement with us, whose very conception of religion is in many cases different from ours?

My appeal to all is that Islam has very much simplified matters for the religious enquirer. It does not require him to rack his brains in abstruse metaphysical problems. It does not require of him any extraordinary capacity for faith and belief. It only wants you to maintain a strictly scientific enquiring spirit with regard to facts to which it invites attention, compare them with all other facts and trust to your reason about the conclusions that appear forced upon you—only not postponing them indefinitely, and sticking to them steadfastly, so that they could serve as foundation for belief in many things not directly observable. It is in the last two things only that the element of faith comes in, a more than usual importance given to the enquiry and the tenacity with which it is held in the face of disturbing elements. When the mind is tempered to this in its intellectual aspect, true faith, which is abiding love and trust in the Unseen God in the midst of trials of life, in the face of appearances pointing towards contrary conclusions, will be easier. No one who lacks the capacity for the former can have capacity

for the latter. This is the importance of the Faith in the Unseen which so many regard as a mere burden and exerecense.

In short Islam frankly seeks to subdue Reason by means of Reason; and if this is horrible to any, we can only say that any religion or philosophy that does not do so is not worth the name of it. It is only the appearances and hasty outlook of things that passes for commonsense that has to be subdued in view of deeper realities or possibilities beyond. It is only this which can serve as a brake to the fantastic extravagances of the self-sufficient, over-persumptuous, self-styled Rationalists and frenzied men of action in economics and politics to-day, that are the terror of modern Western civilisation.

Let me also make it clear that Islam runs counter to and tends to revolutionise much that is believed to be essential for material progress and prosperity. It has nothing but contempt for the economic structure based on self-interest and struggle for mastery of the world. It is only by a sort of compromise that it can tolerate capitalism or any form of modern secular governments. It looks with horror at what is their backbone, the army and armaments, which in the hands of fallible men and women, can, more often than not, be instruments of unspeakable evil. While outwardly all men deprecate lying and cheating, in big political concerns they are highly respectable. So long as the world revels in this so-called civilization, and holds it dear, there is no chance for Islam, true Islam, to be appreciated. At least we, Shias, to whom failure and losing all in the cause of righteousness and preservation of the reputation of Islam in our conduct, is infinitely more precious than all the worldly triumph at the expense of godlessness, can hope for no appreciative hearing in this success-intoxicated world.

Let it be explained that it is hoped there is nothing in Islam inconsistent with material advancement. On the contrary it may prove to be the only road to it with any real and lasting result. But it can only fructify after great trials and sacrifices and patient resignations—a peering by faith into the Unseen beyond the appearances. Meanwhile it must be admitted that there is much in Islam that goes very much against people's material interests. All religions may speak in the same strain about material prosperity, but the remarks are much more apposite to Islam, as in Islam the spiritual and the material, the religious and the political and economic are indissolubly welded together and cannot be separated. But it is useless to talk of these things. The true ideal

has never been well exemplified in practice and never will be. Where is the chance of having a State that has such a sense of responsibility for the necessities of all its subjects that the Imam *undertakes to pay all debts incurred by anybody for unavoidable reasons*. Only the Imams did it privately to the best of their power, though having no State finances at their control. Let the world do what can to reach the highest peaks of comfort and happiness by all the power that arts and sciences can give it, but let this prophecy be remembered that it will never be free from cares and anxieties and fears and heart-burnings—the world is so constituted that whatever you do to improve conditions of life, evils of some other sort will crop up somewhere and the world will continue in tribulation for ever. The only way to overcome suffering in this world is to train oneself to court suffering as a blessing, and say with Our Lord Husain :

“ Happy the heart *aching with fears and anxieties, complaining of his troubles to the Almighty*.

“ No troubles or ailment of his gets the upperhand of his love to his Lord.”

Except in some passages in the Quran there can hardly be found in all the literature of all the world another expression of this sentiment, the counting of distress, cares and anxieties as a blessing because of the sweet solace of having an Almighty Supporter at our back. It is men like these who can fight so valiantly and die so cheerfully amidst the horrors of the plains of Karbala.

Islam is essentially a religion of love—the love of the Prophet and Imams. By means of that bond of love we hope to be united spiritually to these holy souls, so as to receive all their holy influences for virtue and resisting temptation to vice. This is a simple psychological method and enables one to attain suddenly to perfection without all the difficult training for control of emotions, for which Buddhism has so elaborately drawn plans and stages. And there are thousands of instances which bear witness to the efficacy of the method.

But love, of all things, is the most subject to self-delusion. So the whole structure of Islam, its difficult practices and much more difficult demands on our purse, in fact surrender of our all with our life to the Prophet, is designed to be a trial of that love. It was a difficult trial and naturally people could not stand it, and took the Caliphate in their own hands. Our Lord Ali had to retire, or in the civil war that was inevitable Islam

would have been killed immediately after the death of the Prophet, who himself had much difficulty in keeping the allegiance of the people under such difficult conditions. But this is another story. What I mean to explain is why Islam is so difficult a religion for practice. Those who succeed in acquitting themselves in these trials know the spiritual advantages. The results are before the world. It only requires willingness to see.

I say again, these difficulties are all the more reason why people should think twice before embracing such a religion. They must satisfy themselves that here alone we get what we need—helpers in this life and for the next. For this proofs are in abundance some are detailed in the Introduction. Suffice it to say that every Shia who uses Istikhara is a living witness of a hundred thousand miracles of guidance in cases of difficulty.

These rambling thoughts have been suggested by the two loose criticisms on my first volume that have come to my ears. And now under great pressure from all sides I beg to offer in this second volume only those portions that have been printed about three years ago and lying in the press exposed to the mercy of the Elements. God only knows whether it will succeed better in stimulating people to religious enquiry and a free discussion of their doubts and difficulties.

In this volume, owing to the great impatience of the readers, all remaining portions of the Introduction and the Supplement have been omitted, as they have not yet been printed. They are very big notes, particularly the chapter on Traditions bearing on the Quran is a whole book to itself; these will, If God please, be published in the next volume. In the present serious illness of His Holiness—God grant him a speedy recovery—we could not afford to delay the publication further.

A word of submission to the Sunnis. They are too prone to be fired to resentment by any disparaging remarks about the early believers. Let them only consider that if the Shias grant that they were, all or most of them, good believers they are nowhere. Yet they rely wholly and solely on well-known Sunni accounts for their criticism. Also when it is said that many were half-believers, the infinite gradations of faith and belief must never be lost sight of. Conceive yourself going with some urgent purpose to a man whom you find engaged in prayer. He takes a long time in his devotion and the chances are that your will be irritated at—the devotions. This, excuse me, is a bit of infidelity; conceive this magnified a

hundred thousand times in the case of great temporal interests, and you will understand the whole situation. Thirteen centuries have elapsed and the interests have all gone, and it is time that Musalmans come to an understanding on the elementary facts of history and psychology. It is a pity that in the present enlightened age when the religious literature of all other people is occupied with higher, moral and spiritual discussions, ours is confined to the dispute whether so-and-so was an angel or a devil. No one seems to care for the moral effect of choosing our idols.

A. F. BADSHAH HUSAIN.

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THE HOLY QURAN.

INTRODUCTION.

(Continued from Volume 1.)

X. The Quran and Previous Scriptures.

In the previous chapters I have had occasion to deal with some of the objections that have been urged against the Quran and a consideration of these will show that they are mostly due to wrong points of view. The objections cease to be objections if the Book of God is looked at from the right standpoint. In the present chapter I will consider a well-known set of objections which are constantly urged upon as something of tremendous weight, but which, far from being a source of perplexity to the believers in the Quran, would really appear to be a source of gratification to them. The objection that there is nothing new in the Quran, all has been (we have only to modify it by saying, could have been) culled from the teachings and beliefs current among people with whom the Prophet came into contact, is not new, it was urged by the infidels of Mecca in the Prophet's day and is referred to in the Quran. Of late the Western critics of Islam have greatly elaborated this line of argument and in this attempt have added a vast store of historical knowledge. We will see it is only a wrong point of view that makes this appear to them a matter detracting from the claim of the Quran to Divine origin. In reality they have been unconsciously doing a service of great value to the Holy Quran in showing that in spite of the utter lack of materials some traces of the truth can still be found.

Numerous works have been written, and are sedulously published by missionary organizations. The following are some of them. Muir's Sources of Islam, Arnold's Islam and Christianity, Gieger's Judaism and Islam. An excellent summary is given in Huges' Dictionary of Islam.

For the benefit of Musalmans, not acquainted with western languages, a very elaborate book has been published (by Dr. Tisdell) under the title of *Yanabiul Islam* 'Sources of Islam' in Persian and a translation is published with Notes and Supplement in Urdu. To impose on the ignorant with a show of learning and scrupulous care the original

passages drawn on are published in the original languages, and the reader cannot fail to be impressed with the vast amount of erudition shown. The book is repeatedly praised in other ostensibly non-missionary writings (such as Dr Mingana's bombastic book, *Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans*) as a work of great critical abilities; and indeed it can be recommended as a standard work on the subject. Ignorant as I am of Hebrew, Syriac and other languages, in which the early Jewish, Christian and other sacred literature is to be read, and having no access to many works in English my information on the subject is confined to this and similar works, and I cannot but be grateful to them—free use will be made in my Commentary for remarkable confirmations of Quranic passages found in these books. Here I have only to show that invaluable as these references are, the view that these references can be regarded as really "sources" of the Quran, and hence telling against its Divine origin, is entirely fallacious.

But before I come to this question, which is the principal theme of these works, I must dispose of one objection with which this book, *Yamabiul Islam*, opens. I am glad that (so far as I know) no other writer, no missionary writer even, has taken this objection from him, though it is so well calculated to impose on the ignorant. This can be only due to the extreme purity or unfairness of the objection, but the fact that the objection as set in this widely published book does impose on the ignorant, and they sometimes ask about it, is my apology for touching it here, though it deserves no serious reply. So far as I am aware no Muslim writer has taken the trouble to do so probably because it was thought so worthless.

The objection is that there is literary plagiarism in the Quran. The proof is that in the *Divan* (collection of poems) ascribed to Innaul Qais (a poet contemporary with the Prophet) there are found the following verses—the portions placed within brackets are nearly the same as those found in the Quran, and so the author of the Quran is stated to have stolen them from the poet.

Damatil Saatü wa 'nshaqqal qamar
An ghizalin sada qalbi wa nufar
Ahwar qad hurtu fi ausafli
Naesul tarfe be ainaihi huwar
Murra yuumul Ide fi zinatihi
(Farmaani fataata fu aqar)
Bisuhamin min lihazin fatikin
Fatarakani (Khashumil Muhtazar)

Wa iza ma ghaba anni saatan
(Kanatil saatu adha wa amar)
Katabal husn alu wijnateli
Bisabiqil miske sutran mukhtasar
Adatul aqmar e yasri fil duja
Faraitullaila yasri bil qamar
(Bil zuka wal taili) min turratehi
Farquba zal nure kam shain zohar
Qultu iz shaqqal izuru khadduhu
(Danatil saatu wa 'nshaqqal qamar)

And again

Aqbala wal ushshaqa min khalfihi
Kaannuham (min hadakin gausilan)
Wa jaa gannul Ide fi zinatuki
(Lamisle zu jal yaamalil annilun)

So says our learned author making no reference to the edition of the *Divan* where he got these lines. As a matter of fact they are not to be found in any published *Divan* ascribed to the poet. We might have supposed he got them in some Mss Copy, but his Urduo translator who prepared the Urduo edition of the book (Lahore)—and we are told wrote in collusion with the author—says definitely it was in the Teheran edition. As far as I could enquire no edition of Imraul Qais' *Divan* was published anywhere in Persia. One *Divan* of Qais e Majnun (a different man) was published there, but these lines are not found in it either. We leave readers to think what they like of this.

Well, after citing these lines (*without translation*, though throughout the book he does not leave a single Arabic sentence without translation), he says *it is well-known (sic)* that the first piece was one of those which had been hung on the walls of Kaaba as a highest piece of literary art. And then he says '*It is said (sic)* that one day Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, reciting Surah Qamar (No. 54), when the daughter of the poet Imarul Qais was present, the latter said at once 'Thy father has taken this from the poem of my father and declares it to be revealed from Heaven.' '*This story*' says the author '*is well known all over Arabia and Persia.*'

with regard to this story, and this authority that has been adduced for it, one can only say that one did not know that even at the present day there would be respectable people who would publish such stories as that the Prophet had a trained pigeon who would alight on his

shoulders and prick in his ears, and in this way he made the people believe that it was really Gabriel who came to him in that form to give him the revelations. As to the poem itself it is unfortunate that I am here writing for a class of readers who would be mostly ignorant of Arabic language. However, I have cited the pieces *in extenso* for the benefit of those who know Arabic and will leave them to admire or wonder at this masterpiece of Arabic poetry, as the writer calls it. As it happens every word or phrase that has been taken from the Quran has been used in a most inappropriate way, so that the two pieces are really some of the most ridiculous compositions one is ever likely to meet with in his life.

As I am writing for readers mostly unacquainted with Arabic, I will give a translation line by line and compare the phrases concerned (given in italics) with their use in the Quran. I hope the grotesqueness of the use of Quranic words will appear clearly in this even, in some places at least.

1. *The hour has come nigh and the Moon has been split asunder.* In Quran 54: 1 this is said of the famous miracle of the Prophet.

2. By a deer (beloved) that shot arrow (of love) at my heart and then fled away.

3. A black-eyed one in (describing) whose qualities (beauty) I am at my wit's end.

4. With drunken-like side-looks, black-eyed.

5. He went one festival day well-decorated.

6. Then he shot arrow (of love) at me *and made ready* (for slaying) *and thrust spear* (in the neck) (In the Quran 54: 29 this is said of the man who slew Lot's she-camel). How appropriate is the 'made ready' and spearing in the line!

7. With an arrow of sight murderons.

8. Then it left me *like dry branches of trees collected.*

(In the Quran 54: 31 this is said of people killed in Divine punishment).

9. And when he disappeared from me for a moment.

10. *Then the time was most terrible and most bitter* (In the Quran 54: 46 this is said of the time when the Divine punishment had approached overhead).

11. Beauty is written on his lips.

12. With a pounded musk in a thin line.

13. The practice is that moons go by night.

14. But I saw night going by day with moon.

15. *By the sunlight and the night of his locks.*

(In the Quran there is an oath by the sunlight and the night. That too is regarded by the writer as being taken from this poem here).

16. His line of parting hair is luminous. How many things are brightened.

17. When the face divided into cheeks I said.

18. *The hour has come nigh and the Moon has been split asunder* (see first line).

The other piece is

1. He came forward and the lovers are behind him.

2. *As if they are descending from every height.*

(In the Quran 21 : 96 the words are used of Gog and Magog as they come down from all sides for attack.)

3. And he came in decoration on the festival day.

4. *For a thing like this let those who act exert themselves.* (In the Quran this is said of effort for the life in Heaven). How appropriate this is in the line here !

If this, then, is the masterpiece of Arabic poetry, as Mr. Tisdell pretends to believe, then all I can say is woe for Arabic poetry—and its admirers. That not a single one of these wretched, grotesque lines is to be found anywhere in Imraul Qais' Divan I have already said. It is a moot question who invented these lines. I can hardly think Mr. Tisdell would go so far as to invent these lines himself. It might be the work of some of the irresponsible Christian writers of whom we had so many, chiefly in early days.

Even if Mr. Tisdell had got the lines in the Divan of Imraul Qais or Qaise Majnun, or any other of the ancient, pre-Islamic poets, and even if he had satisfied himself that it was a Muslim collection, Mr. Tisdell should have used something of discrimination. He knows that all these Divans of early poets are only collection of poems *ascribed* to them. They were collected ages after them, from stories current about them. Might it not be that the story from which these lines were obtained might be one of the calumnious stories spread about the Prophet by Munafiqs (hypocritical Musalmans) about which we deal in another chapter ? And why then did the Musalmans transmit them at all ? it will be asked I say, what to speak of transmitting them, the Musalmans were as likely to invent these lines, with their story, in the name of the great poet. Any man could have invented these lines in the name of the great poet to show the infinite superiority of the Quran, to show that the Quran, when using phrases used previously before, puts them to an infinitely better

and more appropriate use. The idea, though foolish, is just possible to the ignorant. Or it may be that mistaking to a slight degree the age of the poet, some one may have thought to show how ill it fares with men when they seek to steal from the Book of God and appropriate its phrases to their own use. But this is all idle speculation, and *upon nothing*. We have said these lines have no existence whatever.

It is much more pleasant to deal with the more substantial matters in this book and others on a similar topic. Everyone knows that the Prophet never claimed originality for his religious teachings. On the contrary such an idea is denounced as downright infidelity. He proclaimed that he was not preaching a new religion. He had come only to reestablish the religion of Abraham and the older prophets in its pristine purity. The only *shadow* of originality that can be claimed for Islam is *perhaps* its higher spiritual teaching which the old prophets could not *well impart* owing to the low mental culture of the people they were sent to. Thus Our Lord Jesus Christ says "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come he will guide you unto all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatever he shall hear *that* shall he speak and he will shew you things to come" (John XVI: 12, 13). But this related to higher spiritual matters which the Prophet too could not inculcate to the masses, had to reserve for the few disciples most advanced in faith, and much of it was left to be taught gradually by the Imams as the people became fitted to "bear it." The masses had the cult of Islam and that could be no way different from the religion of Abraham and Moses, centuries before the Prophet, divested of course of the corruptions they had fallen into. And it is this chiefly that is represented in the Quran—on the surface at least. See chapter on the Design of the Quran.

Now, however, corrupt these religions may have become, they must have retained some teachings, some beliefs, and practices in their pure state and Islam must agree with them, while in some there may be a modification according to the errors that have crept in. Would it be right to infer from this that Islam was not a revealed religion—that all in it was culled from Sabeanism, Judaism or Christianity? What sort of reasoning is this, on which volumes have been devoted (!) What is the use of showing that "many of the doctrines and social precepts of the Quran are.....from Judaism. The Unity of God, the ministry of angels, the inspired law, the law of marriage and divorce, domestic slavery.....and many other injunctions are precisely those of the

Mosaic Code with some modifications to meet the requirements of the Arabian social life." ? " Among the moral precepts which are borrowed from the Talmud we may mention that children are not to obey parents when the latter demand that which is evil. Prayer may be performed standing, walking or even riding, devotions may be shortened in urgent cases without committing sin, drunken persons are not to engage in acts of worship, ablutions before prayers are.....generally required.....each permit the use of sand instead of water (Tayammum) when the latter is not to be procured." And so on and so forth. Is there anything in all this more than the suggestion that since these and similar things *could be* borrowed from older religions they *were* actually (*i. e.* wilfully, knowingly) so borrowed and given forth in the name of Revelation ? Clearly no controversy on the lines can be profitable. The reality of the revelation of the Quran can neither be proved nor disproved by these things. The borrowing in the sense suggested is a mere presumption which might have had some weight, if Islam had not independent living evidences of its own (some described in the previous chapters). It is these things that count, not all these futile things.

It is the same with historical verses of the Quran—those relating to the history of the prophets. There is not a shadow of doubt that the Bible and all Jewish and Christian Literature prior to the Prophet was unreliable. Were there any perfectly reliable, sacred scriptures there would hardly be any need for a new Revelation. Yet neither are all pure fictions. They represent traditions held sacred among a fairly religious community. With a mass of baseless matter there may still be much of real historical truth in some of the traditions. It would be interesting to know that some of the statements in the Quran agree with the statements in these older Scriptures or traditions, or, putting it another way, some statements in these generally unreliable books are confirmed by the Holy Revelation. That is the sole value of this enquiry. Nothing more. To argue "borrowing" from this is, as we have said above, merely halderdash.

Indeed, as shown in the chapter on the Design of the Quran, one of the most important purposes of the Holy Revelation was to confirm these Scriptures. It was not meant to be a book of history, yet it serves to give permanency (among those who believe in it) to certain cardinal truths that are to be found in Bible and other books—for, owing to utter insecurity of these anonymous and undated documents, people are (as is well-known) inclined to disbelieve these truths also.

Such truths are the reality of the prophets and their inspiration; that they came with miracles and so forth. Now that these old books have from their dark history come to the position of old wives' tales we can only believe these things on the authority of the Quran and this was its use as verifier of these Scriptures (2 : 38, 85, 3 : 34 &c.)

But obvious as all this is, the other point of view makes a see-saw between these so-called critics and believers that will go on for ever.

The former will continue to urge the "conformities and divergences" as proofs of borrowing, and the latter will continue to regard these as remarkable confirmations of their Holy Book. Nothing can decide this, the decision must rest with something else. If the Quran has independent proofs of its Divine origin the decision must be in accordance with it. If not, the matter must remain undecided or be settled by probabilities. Granting that the Prophet could get information about Moses' miracles from common reports, or information about certain things in the Hereafter from some Guehrs (Zoroastrians)—where did the Prophet get information about the moving on of mountains like clouds, the cracks in the earth, the sexes in plants and so forth? It is here that we see the wisdom of the Holy Verse (Surah 7 : 279). 'And We know that they say that a person teaches him. But the language of him whom they lean to is Persian (or Barbarian) while this is plain Arabic tongue.' As said in the beginning the suggestion that the material for the Quran has been borrowed is not new; insinuations of this kind were made by the Prophet's contemporaries. But really such insinuations are unanswerable. There is no denying the possibility that the Prophet could have gleaned these stories, as well as the rest of his teachings (*as ordinarily made public*) from here and there. The *possibility* of these things being culled from the sources indicated must be accepted and be taken for what it is worth. But what of it? Where would the miracle of literary art go, which the Quran has been arguing as proof of its Divine origin? As it was the ignorant infidels who were to be answered, only the literary miracle was referred to here, otherwise as shown in chapter V the Quran is a miracle of miracles. In short the verse teaches us how to proceed in a discussion on these lines. It is useless to wrangle on the question whether or not anything taught in the Quran was so absolutely new to all in Arabia that the Prophet could not have got it from any source possible. The discussion must be shifted to other sides of the question. The first thing to see is whether there is any direct, clear evidence of Divine origin, and if this is proved the enquiry proposed becomes *ipso facto* meaningless.

It may be stated *once for all* that there is no value whatever attaching to this inconclusive discussion. It might have had some value if the Bible or the Talmud &c. could have been a demonstrably correct record of truths or a pure fiction. In these cases the agreement or disagreement of the Quran with them might have had a vital effect on the claim of the Quran and the belief about it. But who could assert either? It would be far more interesting if contemporary records or other independent documents such as those that the archeologists are unearthing could be shown to have any bearing, favourable or adverse, on the statements made in the Quran, whether agreeing or disagreeing with accounts in the Bible. But so far practically no such have been found, and it is satisfactory that the few that have been found are more or less confirmatory. Thus it was once held that Hud, Saleh &c. were legendary prophets (and hence, according to the customary ways of thinking, or rather suggestion, mere fictions or non-entities). The identification of the former with Eber of the Bible (Hughes) is clearly fanciful. George Zaidane in an old issue of *AL HILAL* expressed the opinion that it was possibly a party of Jews who did some missionary work in Arabia. Now in an inscription in Himyari character purporting to be written by some follower of Hud's among the later Adites, his name appears as a prophet and what is more interesting teaching the same doctrines substantially as Our Holy Prophet. Thus one of the verses is 'Our Kings make laws for us in accordance with the teachings of Hud and we believe in miracles, and prophets and resurrection.' Forester in his *Historical Geography of Arabia* has given an account of this inscription. He also refers to an inscription purporting to come from a queen of Yemen who being sorely distressed with famine wrote for supplies to Joseph at Egypt, but did not get anything in time and died. But this one is from books and the inscription is not found to-day. We are obliged to Mr. Sulaiman Nadvi, author of *Arzū Quran* and Maulvi Syed Anlad Haider, author of *Uswatul Rasul* for these references from Forester. So if Khamurabbi is the same as Amerphel of the Bible, the contemporary of Our Lord Abraham, then we can understand how the laws in the Mosaic Code agree remarkably with the Babylonian Code. It is things of this sort that can have bearing on the claim of the Quran to be an inspired book—not the chance that any account given in it can be traced in the Bible or Talmud or not. But the critics of Islam would have us consider everything in their own way.

Prejudices and prepossessions apart, the above observations may to every unprejudiced thoughtful enquirer make it plain that all the

labours that have been made to refute the inspiration of the Quran on these lines are simply wasted, and have no value whatever. If anything they are only serviceable to the cause of Islam. Indeed if we carefully look into the matter, even if we grant that the Prophet got information about the old prophets &c. from people around him and it was this information that was worked up—let us use their word—in the Quran, even that does not disprove that the Quran was the Revelation from God, on the contrary it may to some extent prove it. For it is well-known, and has been repeatedly said before, that revelations frequently came to the Prophet *in response to thoughts passing in his mind*. Granting that he somewhere heard of a prophet, heard something about him that he did not know from before—well this is not impossible—he must occasionally have thought about him, and in response to and in connection with his thoughts a revelation may come. It will necessarily be connected with materials supplied from external sources and yet be of Divine origin. Indeed there is one place in the Quran in which it looks as if such might be the case, though of course we cannot definitely know it. In the Mishnah Sanhedrim X : 3 commenting on Genesis 4 : 19 where the Lord is said to have said to Cain 'The voice of thy brother's blood (Heb. bloods) crieth unto Me from the ground' it is argued from the plural form used for the word blood that it means his life and the lives of all his posterity. And after this it is said that "for this reason it is that if any one kills a man among Israelites it will be accounted for him as if he had killed all men and if any one makes alive a man from Israelites it is as if he had made alive all mankind." Now in Surah 5 : 27-32 there is an account of Cain's murdering his brother and then in verse 33 we read, "For this reason we have ordained it for the Israelities that whoever killeth a soul except (on charge of) murder or mischief in the land, then it is as if he had killed all men together, and whoever saves one it is as if he has saved all men together. And there came unto them Our prophets with manifest proofs but many of them after this became prodigals on the earth."

All critics, down to Noeldeke (see his article on the Quran in Ency : Britt. 11th Ed.) regard this verse as having been borrowed from Mishnah Sanhedrim, only the exegesis from the Biblical narrative being omitted, the verse becomes almost meaningless for want of connection. They do not see that this almost proves that this verse was a true revelation from God. It may be that as the verses about Cain's history were revealed the Prophet, perhaps, thought of the argument in Mishnah from words of Genesis, which we must suppose to be transmitted from

the times of the prophets, probably based on their teachings. In response to this thought coming to the mind of the Prophet the revelation comes: Yes, for this reason have We made the sin of murder so grievous for *Israelites*; the meaning being that *since* owing to their prophets, and the Scripture being given to them *the Israelites had risen to the right conception of the gravity of murder, the crime will be so accounted for them.* Clearly it cannot be the same thing for the cannibals, who know no better than that it is their natural right to kill and eat those whom they conquer in fight. Morals are relative to the moral development of the people. And so the Commentators say that though in the text the words are used of the *Israelites* only, yet they are applicable to *Muslimans* as well, in fact all men (of course, according to the light they have). I may say that the very fact that the verse in the Quran is not connected with the preceding verses, and the connection is found in the *Mishnah*, shows that it was a true revelation. It shows how careful the Prophet was to give as Quran only that which *was* revelation. That which connected it with the preceding verses being thoughts in his mind and not recounted in the revelation is suppressed to ensure the purity of the text. Thus what appears to our friends as a formidable objection against the Quran (it is repeated times without number) is really one of the proofs in its favour. What then (to return to the question) does it matter if we suppose for instance, that the whole of Cain's story the Prophet first got from, say, some Christian preacher. It may be that as he thought over it some time, the revelation might have come in response to or in connection with his thoughts. Really nothing but prejudice or prepossession can prevent a man from seeing the utter pointlessness of disputing on these lines about the Quran. By the bye the Quran makes a useful correction here. According to the Jewish comment it was the *Israelite* blood and no other that was to be deemed so weightly. According to Quran all human blood is so weighty and must be regarded as such by the *Israelites* and *Muslims*. See, however, another and a more probable explanation in the body of the Commentary.

In the chapter on the Design of the Quran we have explained the main reason why only the prophets and events generally known to the people were mentioned in the Quran. The Quran was not meant to be a book of history; whatever was mentioned was mentioned with a purpose, generally of exhortation. For this it was clearly necessary to refer to well-known and well-believed cases. A further reason was that it was desirable that only those prophets should be mentioned whose teachings, as generally known, were conformable to Islam. This was the case only

with Hebrew prophets. However corrupt or unreliable the Hebrew Scriptures and traditions might be they at least carried the tradition of monotheism with them. Zoroaster, Buddha, Krishna may have been prophets, but the teachings now associated with their names are grossly perverted, very much incompatible with Islam. To introduce them as prophets would have been to introduce a fruitful source of deception in Islam. People would generally be led to accept teachings generally associated with their names. Thus critics cannot raise this presumption even that because it was *only* the accounts accessible to the Prophet that are found in the Quran, so it was presumably derived from these sources and not from God. Similar and even much simpler considerations will explain why the disciplinary directions and practices or legal directions were taken from religions near about, and not from Australia or South America. In this connection let it be *further* remembered that it was the prerogative of the Prophet. He enjoined what he thought best, it was only approved of by God. Even if the practices he took from the Jews, Christians or Sabæans were—for arguments sake—not rightly derived from the old prophets, he was not bound to them and with suitable modifications could have adopted them for his religion.

One other thing requires to be noted. If the Quran had *indifferently* adopted (or diverged from) the accounts in the previous Scriptures it *might* be said that it took it from them through unreliable media. But if it appears that wherever the Quran differs from them it is *always* the Quran that appears right and the Bible demonstrably wrong, then we must acknowledge that it is certainly no mere borrowing, but must have a higher authority. Thus we know that following the Biblical account the Jews believed Our Lord Solomon to have gone down to infidelity. In the Quran 2 : 96 he is cleared of this imputation. In the note on that verse we have shown that the Quranic view is right from the admission even of Biblical scholars. Indeed the thing is impossible. How on earth is it possible that the man with whom God established his covenant (see 2 Kings) should be such as to stoop to such things. But the Bible has made of God such a most miserable, contemptible thing that it is no wonder people chosen by Him, and even those after His own heart should go down to the blackest and basest of sins. So the Bible makes Aaron the maker of the Golden Calf. To say nothing of the high esteem of God about him before this, did it undergo any change after this most heinous act? The Calf-worshippers are punished; nothing is said for Aaron himself. He and his family continue to remain priests for ever. In the Quran it is said to be the work of one Samiri. Taking it to mean

Samaritan (pertaining to Samaria) our critics how! "This shows the ignorance of the author of the Quran. Samaria was built by Omri about fifty years after Solomon." But is it so certain that Samiri means nothing but a resident of Samaria or some way in connection with it? And, even if it were so, is it certain that when Omri made Samaria his capital and made of it a big city, Samaria did not exist under that name from before, say as a village? Was the name also freshly given to the place? Again, as said before, why must Samiri be understood to be one belonging to Samaria at all? Lately my friend Syed Masroor Husain Sahib has very ably shown in his book 'Ejazul Quran' that the man might have been called Samiri as a patronymic after Shimron Son of Isaacur (see Num. 26: 11). So, as already observed, in the passage about Cain's story also the Quran corrects the statement in the Targum. The passage there means that the gravity is only for those who kill or save the life of an Israelite. In the same way according to the Bible when Jacob was reluctant to leave Joseph to the case of his brethren the latter told him that he might slay one of their own sons if anything untoward happened to Joseph (!) The Quran omits this unnatural solicitation.

So far we have been dealing only with what may be said to be the logic of the point in the controversy, and yet we are not quite done with it. However, it is satisfactory that there is not much besides logic to deal with at all on this question; the so-called "sources" they have laboriously gathered are really confirmations of the Quranic statements—and that is the end of the matter. And in the course of our discussion we have replied to—not one of the, but—almost *the* objection that has been triumphantly raised against us—that relating to verse 33 of Surah V.

Well we have not yet done with this. The above might be the line of criticism adopted by any man whether he believed in the Bible or the Talmud or not. But the Christian critics take a more special, much more unreasonable line of objection. To statements that find confirmation in the Old and New Testaments they have no objection beyond saying that the Quran is indebted to them for the information. But they speak very disparagingly where they find any statement that can only find support in books like Talmud, Midrash, or the Apocryphical Gospels. These books, they say, are quite unreliable and so the Quranic statements which, as they say, are based upon them, are also unreliable—from which it is an easy affair to proceed further and say or suggest they are all base-

less, pure fictions. Need I examine the logic of this—what should I say? -attitude? Nothing but prejudice can make a man have that course of thought. How often should we repeat that in the hands of the Jews and Christians there has remained no thoroughly reliable literature, neither the Bible nor the Talmud, neither the received nor the Apocryphal Gospels, yet neither are all old wives' tales. Being held sacred by vast numbers of people all must contain some elements of truth, some reminiscences of truth. The mere fact that *as a whole* they are all unreliable cannot make us distrustful of every thing found in them to the point of regarding the agreement of the Quran with them in some matters a point of objection against it.

Nothing more need be said on this point. But since these men would have us regard the Talmud as immeasurably lower than the Bible I would beg to ask the reader's patience for some length of uninteresting matter.

Our idea about the Bible is, I say, just nothing more or less than, what is that of every *Christian* who knows anything about his Bible or his religion. This is what a devout Christian Prof. J. E. Carpenter says of the Biblical books. "We know now that the books formerly attributed to Moses did not come into existence all at once—they were the production of centuries; that the prophecies gathered under the name of Isaiah proceed from several different hands, that the Psalms of David may more fitly be described as the hymn-book of the second Temple: that the visions of Daniel were seen not in Babylone but in Palestine, and the oppressor was not Nebuchadnezzar but Antiochus Epiphanus." "These discoveries" the professor tells us "are not a loss, rather are they a gain We are no longer troubled at finding historical inconsistencies and moral incongruities" and so forth.

One could if one liked devote a whole volume to show the utter worthlessness of the Bible as a wholly reliable historical record. Volumes have been written to show its contradictions, inaccuracies and the like. But it is hardly pleasant to say anything on a position that has been surrendered long ago. Suffice it to say these are a set of books of which nothing is known—neither the authorship, nor the date; the only thing certain is that they have passed through a number of unknown hands who have nuscrapulously made additions and alterations without leaving any note to indicate what they have done. A whole literature has been written on all this and it is all old story.

It is much more pleasant to say what can be said to show the *relative* antiquity and authenticity of the sacred record. This I will do in the words of Revs. Burnet and Adney (Ency: Britt. 11th Ed) greatly abridged, and I will confine myself to the Hexateuch as it is this portion of the Bible that is interesting to us in connection with the Quran.

"The traditions current among the Israelites respecting the origins and early history of their nation—the patriarchal period, and the times of Moses and Joshua—were probably first cast into a written form in the 10th or 9th century B. C. by a prophet living in Judah, who from the almost exclusive use in his narrative of the sacred name of "Jahweh" (Jehovah).....is referred to among scholars by the abbreviation 'J.' This writer who is characterised by a singularly bright and picturesque style and also by deep religious feeling and insight begins his narrative with the account of creation of man from the dust, and tells of the first sin and its consequences (Gen. ii: 4-iii: 24), then he gives an account of the early growth of civilization (Gen. iv) of the flood (parts of Gen. vi-viii) and the origin of different languages (xii-9), afterwards in a series of vivid pictures he gives the story, as tradition told it, of the patriarchs, of Moses and the Exodus, of the journey through the wilderness and the conquest of Canaan.....(*further examples*).

"Somewhat later than "J" another writer, commonly referred to as "E" from his preference for the name of Elohim (God) rather than "Jehovah," living apparently in the northern kingdom, wrote down the traditions of the past as they were current in Northern Israel, in a style resembling that of "J" but not quite as bright and vivid, and marked by differences of expression and representation. The first traces of 'E' are found in the life of Abraham, in parts of Gen. xv.....(*further examples*)The laws contained in Exodus xx: 23 and xxiii: 19 were no doubt taken by "E" from a pre-existing source; with the regulations...as incorporated in "J" (Ex. xxxiv: 17-26) they form the oldest legislation of the Hebrew that we possess.....

"Not long, probably, after the fall of northern kingdom in 722 B. C. a prophet of Judah conceived the plan of compiling a comprehensive history of the traditions of his people. For this purpose he selected extracts from the two narratives "J" and "E" and combined them together into a single narrative introducing in some places additions of his own. This combined narrative is commonly known as "J E." As distinguished from the priestly narrative (to be mentioned presently) it has a distinctly

prophetical character; it treats the history from the standpoint of the prophets. Most of the best known narratives of the patriarchal and Mosiac ages belong to "J E." His style, especially in the parts belonging to "J" is graphic and picturesque, the descriptions are vivid and abound in detail and colloquy, and both emotion and religious feeling are warmly and sympathetically expressed in it.

"*Deuteronomy.* In the 7th century B. C. during the reign of either Manasseh or Josiah, the narratives of "J E" was enlarged by the addition of the discourses of Deuteronomy. These discourses purport to be addresses delivered by Moses, to the assembled people, shortly before his death, in the land of Moab opposite to Jericho. There was probably some tradition of a farewell address delivered by Moses, and the writer of Deuteronomy gave this tradition form and substance.....

"The influence of Deuteronomy upon subsequent books of the Old Testament is very perceptible. Upon its promulgation it speedily became the book which both gave the religious ideals of the age and moulded the phraseology in which these ideals were expressed. The style of Deuteronomy, when once it had been formed, lent itself readily to imitation, and thus a school of writers imbued with its spirit, and using its expressions, quickly arose, who have left their mark upon many parts of the Old Testament. In particular the parts of the combined narrative "J E" which are now included in the book of Joshua passed through the hands of a Deuteronomic editor who made considerable additions to them.

"The priestly sections of the Hexateuch (known as "P") remain still to be considered. That these are later than "J E" and even than Deut. is apparent—to mention but one feature—from the more complex ritual and hierarchical organization which they exhibit. They are to all appearance the work of a school of priests, who after the destruction of the Temple in 586 B. C. began to write down and codify the ceremonial regulations of the pre-exilic times combining them with an historical narrative extending from the Creation to the establishment of Israel in Canaan, and who completed their work during the restoration in 537 B. C.".....(*examples*).....

These are the results of a century or more of enquiry carried on in a strictly religious spirit, meant to explain the innumerable inconsistencies and contradictions and mistakes in the Holy Books. With this the Christians rest satisfied and instead of believing as before that the Bible is a Divine account of man, they are now content to regard it as Man's account of the

Divine, and we may not trouble them further, though much can be said in this respect too. Well, you will find this view of the Bible even in Dummellow's Commentary which is so popular among the orthodox Christians that a translation of it—the Introduction only yet—has been issued, with loud eulogies, for missionary work in India.

What, now, is one to gather from all this. No one now believes that the five books are the work of Moses, or even that they are substantially based upon his writings. Indeed Norton, as shown by Fakhral Islam (see his *Anisul Aalam*), even doubts that Moses wrote any books at all, writing being not current in his time, even the Papyrus leaves being begun to be used much later (though this is perhaps going too far). All you can come to is that they are reminiscences, more or less reliable, of his times and his teachings. Though not perfectly reliable they are not wholly baseless. And that is our Islamic conception of these books. When we are glad to find that any statement (of fact or teaching) is confirmed by these Scriptures, the reason is not that we think that the Quran needs any such verification, but that it does something to make *individual facts, taken by themselves* more or less probable, being carried *some way nearer* to their authentic record. Religion is nothing if it is not meant to teach truths unknown and more or less unverifiable, and we must needs be glad if any appear to have more or less of corroboration or intrinsic probability. We are further glad that when the Quran proclaims itself as a verifier of these old Scriptures it stands up for books which, however bad their condition may be, are at least venerable and not to be thrown away with utter contempt, not books like the Puranas which are wholly baseless fictions pure and simple.

Let us now see whether from this point of view the very much derided Talmud, Midrash, and other such literature which has been sacred to Jews and the apocryphal Gospels which have been sacred to old Christians are of much inferior value. Unreliable they *as a whole*, are admittedly; but exactly just like the Biblical books they represent traditions respected among a people who laid down their lives for their religion. Just consider the origin of the Talmud. It is said that besides giving the written Law which we find the Torah Moses also gave an Oral Law which served to comment on and amplify the former; also some of it was esoteric and not meant for the masses. This is plausible enough, everyone can see. The conditions at the time of Our Lord Moses were two thousand years worse than those in the time of Our Lord Mohammed. To say nothing of other things the difficulty of

writing was by itself such that nothing but a short Written Law could have been written, and all the rest of teachings should have been suffered to be transmitted by tradition. As in the case of *Hades-e-qadsi* or *W'alye Ghare Matloo* much must have been esoteric, confined to a few disciples only, owing to the incapacity of the masses to receive it. Well, this Oral Law is said to have been transmitted by continuous tradition through a succession of priests who are all named. This continuous succession of names may be simply an invention, but there is hardly any reason to doubt that a large part of the teachings was carried on by tradition which, though believed to be as much sacred as the Written Law, was considered sacrilegious to be written down *and published for the masses*. The last words are important as it does not appear that it remained always unwritten as we shall presently see. How sacred this traditional lore was to them appears from the grossly exaggerated views they came to form of it. In later times they openly avowed that the Oral Law was superior to the Written Law, and even that the Covenant of God with the Israelites was not about the Written Law but about the Oral Law.

For the antiquity of the traditions on which this Talmudic Literature is based it is sufficient to cite the following from Eney : Britt. IIth Edition, Art. Talmud.

The writer Mr. S. A. Cook evidently regards its basis as nearly as authoritative as that of the Bible. He says, "Literary and historical criticism places the discussion on another basis when it treats the Mosiac Torah *in its present form* as a post-Exilic compilation (about 5th century B. C.) from sources differing in date, origin and history. There is no *a priori* reason why other legal enactments should not have been current when the compilation was first made....."

Again in a note: "It is known that a great mass of oral tradition was current, and there are a number of early references to written collections, especially of haggadah. On the other hand certain references indicate that there was strong opposition to writing down the Oral Law. It is possible therefore that written works were in circulation among the learned and that these contained varying interpretations which were likely to injure efforts to maintain a uniform Judaism.....
(References from Philo, Josephus, New Testament &c.; also modern scholars speaking of written collections). The theory of an esoteric tradition is distinctly represented in 2 Esdras XIV where Moses receives words which were not to be published, and Ezra rewrites seventy books which were to be delivered to the wise men of his people. Also the book of Jubilees

knows of secret written traditions containing regulations regarding sacrifices &c., and Jacob hands over "all his books and the books of his fathers to Levi his son that he might preserve them and renew them for his children (*i. e.* the priestly caste) unto this day (XLV : 16)." .

Thus there is no doubt that Talmudic Literature is based, much of it, on written materials of great antiquity, and, as such, is, from our point of view, on the same footing as the Mosaic Torah. And we see in the above citations that the Western scholars, those at least who have no religious prepossessions, agree with us on that point. The vast body of tradition was collected in the Talmud when about 70 A. D. the oral teaching became impossible—the very existence of Jewish Society was in peril. Can any one believe that in that hour of danger they set to write down volumes of mere amusing tales not seriously meant, as the Christian writers represent them to be? Who now will accept the point of view of the Christian critics of Islam who premise that, contrary to the Bible, the Talmud &c. are wholly unreliable, and then proceed to infer that the statements in the Quran that are taken—as they say, from these are pure fictions?

In fairness, however, to our Christian critics it may be stated that the Talmud and allied Literature does contain some absurd features which are calculated to make a very bad impression on a hasty reader, especially one who is prejudiced against it from the beginning, and is prepossessed with the idea that there is nothing but idle tales in it. One of these is that whatever it states it often strives to find support or reason for it in scriptural authority. In this attempt verses are stripped of their context and are given meanings which they cannot possibly bear. An instance of this will be found in the citation from Aboda Sarah in note to 2 : 55. Mr. Cook also in his article on the Talmud in Ency. Britt. has noticed this feature and regards it partly unconscious and partly as a kind of conventional "legal fiction." Every body knows that the law or the tradition has independent origin in usage or authority, but has been made to fit in with, or issue from, the more recognized authority. It was also meant to show that the Word of God has "infinite potentiality," contains an infinity of meanings which can apply to any case. This is the simple fact; but prejudiced eyes see in it a tendency to spin out tales to interpret the plainest words of the Scripture in a most fantastic manner.

Everybody knows that since nothing is said in the Bible about the power Solomon had over all creation, birds, beasts, spirits, his under-

standing their language and pressing them to his service, and since they do not regard him as a prophet, on the contrary hold him to have been a sinner and well-nigh apostatised, accounts of such things must have been derived from independent tradition, which indeed, must be considered to have some weight, as it was so inconsistent with the natural trend of their thoughts. Who then can believe, as these men assert (see Yanabiul Islam) that it was all due to a mistranslation of two words in Ecclesiastians? If the words for men and women songsters were really mistranslated demons and spirits, the error must have been due to the previous belief that Our Lord had control over spirits.

So who is to believe that the story in Midrash about Our Lord Abraham being cast in the fire originated simply with a misunderstanding of the word Ur which is asserted to be really the name of a city though it was understood as a common noun meaning fire? (See Gen. XV: 7) "I am the Lord that brought thee out of the Ur of Chaldees" It is even asserted (Yanabi-ul Islam) that in Babylonian language the word is used as common noun of a city and it is this word which has given the name Jerusalem (*i. e.* city of peace) so that the Babylonian word has been by some mistake used in the Hebrew of Genesis. This seems asserted to avoid the difficulty of disproving that Ur was really the name of the city in the time of Abraham. It is possible, however, that like Medina the place may have later got the name of Ur owing to the famous incident. We may be sure that the ancient Hebrews knew their languages and their text better than the modern conjecturers. And even among the moderns many have been led to accept the Rabbinical interpretation as the right one, as appears from Hughes' Dictionary of Islam and the article on Midrash in Ency. Britt. 11th Ed. The tradition was current not only among Jews but among early Christians as well, and the 25th Canon II (January) was fixed in Syrian Calendar for commemoration of the event.

It will perhaps be asked that if these miraculous things were genuine why it was that they were not related in the Bible? It would perhaps not be quite legitimate to put this question to us. But is it at all fair to regard the few leaves of Genesis as embodying all the traditions current at the time it was written? It may even be that the name Ur being itself associated with Abraham's story it was considered unnecessary to mention it. As to Solomon's miraculous gifts we have to see in what books in the Bible can we expect such things to be described. In the books of Kings or Chronicles? We do not expect accounts of isolated miracles in books of national history. We do not expect very

much of miracles in books like the *Sirat* of Ibn Hisham concerned principally with the course of public events of the Prophet's day. And would any one expect to find any such thing in "Wisdom Literature" as the *Proverbs* or *Ecclesiastius*. The latter, I may state, is quite spurious. As the *Ency : Britt.* 11th Ed. says it 'consists of moralizings, prompted by the dark times in which the author's lot in life was cast, or disappointments which seemed to him to be the reward of all human, labour, and the inability of man to remedy the injustices and anomalies of society. If only upon linguistic grounds—for the Hebrew of the book resembles often that of *Mishnah* more than the ordinary Hebrew of the Old Testament—*Ecclesiastius* must be one of the latest books in the Hebrew Canon. It was most probably written during the Greek period towards the end of 3rd century B. C."

The last note about *Ecclesiastius* leads me insensibly to notice the book of *Esther*, as one of the most formidable-looking objections to a name mentioned in the *Quran* is based upon it. Haman is mentioned in the *Quran* as a minister to Pharoah, the oppressor of Moses' people. In the Book of *Esther* we read of a Haman who was minister to a Persian King Ahasuerus (who is supposed to be same as Xerxes of history). This Haman having been stated in the book to have plotted to exterminate the Jews, but foiled in his design and instead got hanged himself with his sons, is said to have been wrongly regarded by the Prophet as minister to the Pharoah of Moses who is never mentioned in the Bible. It is supposed that hatred of the Jews to Haman and their observance of the feast of Purim, the day when he died, led to the misconception. A mere name, you would say, as if two different persons cannot have the same name. Yet no one who has not read the writings of the critics of Islam can realise how much is made of it. Hughes says "It is not surprising that Muhammed should associate Haman with Pharoah as an enemy of the Jews, since he cared little when individuals lived, *provided they could be introduced with advantage.*" This very remark ought to have suggested to Hughes that his observation was baseless. What use is made of Haman in Pharoah's story in the *Quran* or even in the traditions. If anything had been said of the activities of Haman in the matter, akin or any way like those attributed to Haman in *Esther's* story, then it could be considered possible that it was the latter somehow misrepresented. But when not a word is said about anything done by him it remains only a question of two persons having a common name. And can we be sure that Haman was the real name of the minister of Ahasuerus? May it indeed not be that the name

was given to him because of a remote tradition about Haman the minister of Pharaoh? Do we not know that it was the practice of the Jews to pervert the names of or give new offensive names to persons hateful to them? In how many different forms is the name of Our Lord Jesus perverted in the Talmud? Nay, you will say, it is not Talmud but a Holy Book of the Scriptures. But read it and you will know for yourself. The tale, whatever grain of basis there might be for it, is as fantastic as any in the Talmud. You will be strack dumb at the providential coincidences, to say nothing of "squaring" details or the extravagant dreamland of the king's court. And the opinion of critics is the same. The following is in the note about it in Art. Bible in the Ency. Britt. "The book of *Esther*, which describes, with many legendary traits, how the beautiful Jewess succeeded in rescuing her people from the destruction which Haman had prepared for them, will not be earlier than the closing years of the 4th century B. C. and is thought by many scholars to be even later." As I wish to convince the extremest sections of people I quote this from this pronouncedly religious writer; but I request the reader to read the article on Esther in Ency: Britt. 11th Edition where the whole is treated as a *mere fable* having no historical basis whatever. The origin of the names in the book including Haman's is discussed in a mythological way. In the notes in the appropriate place where this story comes in the Quran we will show that from the name it appears that the name was an Egyptian, (Haman=h-Amman *i.e.* pertaining to the chief Egyptian god Amman).

We have been too long in this discussion and we cannot afford to do more in an Introduction. In the notes we will discuss as fully as we can the places where the Quran differs from the present Bible and agrees with Talmudic literature or differs from either. We may now sum up the facts concerning the Mosaic Torah in which we are especially interested.

1. Moses had a copy of the Law placed in the Tabernacle to be a witness against the people. This official copy was meant to be the authoritative text. Looking to the difficulties of writing in those days the people were apparently guided by oral tradition; at the most, some Chateehismic pieces based on the original law may be with isolated people.

2. This authoritative copy was lost some time before Solomon, for on making search for it it was not found.

3. When religious revival set in in the reign of Josiah a Priest Hilkiah found the Book of the Law in the Temple, *where none had been before*, and it was confirmed by a prophetess.—(1)

4. In the 6th century B. C. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple and devastated all the houses and buildings in Jerusalem, setting fire to everything they could come across and carried away the Jews in captivity to Babylon.

5. But Ezra the prophet wrote the Scriptures again for the people, and it is said of him that if it had not been for him the Scriptures would have been utterly lost to the world. So the books are again based on the authority of a single priest. (But see Ency. Britt. 11th Ed. Art. Jews).

6. After this Emperor Antiochus pillaged the Jews in 161 B. C. and had all copies of Scriptures put to flames and ordered that any one found concealing any scripture or acting by it would be put to death (1 Maccabees). Thus the books written (or rewritten, as is believed, by Ezra) were also destroyed, and were rewritten some time later from memory, or God knows what.

We must now hurry up to the Gospels. That there existed something called Gospel of Christ should be obvious to anyone who considers the very frequent use of this word in the Gospels, Acts and Epistles that form the received New Testament. In one instance it is very clear: "I marvel that ye be so soon removed.....unto another Gospel. Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ." (Gal. 1: 6 7). None but the Christians can believe that in all these places it is only Christ's teaching that is meant, as if the early Christians had sworn to use that unusual word in the sense of teaching or religion, and never use the right word for the idea. It is satisfactory to find that the great scholar, Eichborn, accepts this view, and Le Clerc, Cope, Michaelis, Lessing and Marsh also are said to incline to this view. It is possible that this original Gospel was never carefully written or published—the ministry of Our Lord was too short, at the most three years—only the substance of the teaching was incorporated in books meant for the instruction of the Christians, such as the various Gospels were intended to be. One thing is certain. "We have an express statement, which must have been originally made before the end of the first century, that the apostle Matthew composed in Hebrew a work described as *Logia*. This word need not mean, but may quite well and pointedly mean, a collection specially of Sayings and would still more

aptly denote a collection of Divine or authoritative sayings....." (Ency. Britt. 11th Ed. Art Bible) Also, "The literary analysis of the synoptic Gospels brings out a number of sections common to Matthew and Luke which probably at one time existed as an independent document. This document consisted, in the main though not entirely, of a collection of Sayings of the Lord, which set in strong relief at once His character and the moral and religious ideal that He desired to commend" (*Ibid*). Also from the Talmud we know that before the end of the 1st century A. D. the Christians had a *sacred book* which is named *aron gillaion* 'writing-tablet's sin,' clearly a wilful perversion of Evangelion, according to their usual practice (Burkeitt's Christian Beginnings). Now we know that this sacred book could not have been these Gospels (or any Gospels) or other literature in the New Testament, for none of these books were considered inspired or sacred in the first ages. The idea investing them with a kind of sanctity and even authority grew late in the 2nd century A. D. (See discussion of steps towards this in Ency. Britt. Art Bible, New Testament Canon). We think this sufficient answer to those who say that "it is a mere assertion" on the part of the Mussalmans that the *Injil* originally revealed to Our Lord Jesus was lost and the present Gospels are of the nature of Hadis (traditions) incorporating some reminiscences of the teachings of Our Lord.

We cannot afford space for a history of these Gospels. Any shilling book can give this. For the reliability of the information contained in them one has only to compare the genealogies of Our Lord given in Matthew and Luke. The general reader may get a fair idea of their worth by perusing such common books as Greg's Creed of Christendom &c. We cannot, however, afford to pass over the question, how it was that out of the very numerous Gospels that were in vogue among early Christians four were recognised and the rest treated as apocryphal. The fact is that as Baur has shown (and has been widely accepted since his day) "the early Christians were Jewish Christians to whom Jesus was the Messiah; Paul, on the other hand, represented a breach with Judaism, the Temple and the Law. Thus there was some antagonism between the Jewish apostles Peter, James and John and the Gentile Apostle Paul, and this struggle continued to the middle of the 2nd century." During this period the attacks of the Greeks, in which there was the memorable sack of Jerusalem, reduced both the Jews and Christians to a miserable plight and awakened the latter to the necessity of conciliating internal differences and agreeing to the teaching of Paul who would have religion consist only of faith without any trammels of

law or any practices or ceremonials, so that the Gentiles may be easily won over. The writers of the received Gospels wrote with a "mediating or conciliatory tendency (*tendenz*)" in the matter and this appears to be the chief theme that made them more popular than the rest. The apocryphal Gospels insist, most of them, on a Judaic Christianity, and to this day Christian writers speak disparagingly of their puerility &c. Knowing what we know of the times we cannot but give some of them an unqualified superiority over these received ones. For illustration we will take a passage of the Qur'ān which has been ridiculed as being based on the Gospel of Infancy and not on the received Gospels—the well-known gratuitous premiss being that everything found in these Gospels and not in the received Gospels must be baseless. In Surah 19: 29-31 Our Lord Jesus is said to have spoken while a baby in the cradle and announced his being an Apostle and so forth. This is found in the Gospel of Infancy as follows: "In the book of Josephus, the chief priest in the time of Christ (and people say that he was called Caphias) we find that Jesus spoke while he was in the Cradle. He said to his mother, 'Verily I am Jesus son of God and am the Word that thou hast brought forth as was revealed to thee by angel Gabriel.'" Just consider the honesty of the writer. He does not claim inspiration, nor write like Luke with the vague authority of "having had perfect understanding of all things from the first" or "things most surely believed among us." He fairly cites his authorities from whom he has got the thing in writing. Can a single passage like this be cited even in Luke and Mark who were not eye-witnesses? and if, as is believed, the former made use of written materials he did not even name them.

A most offensive calumny is that the Prophet regarded Mary the mother of Jesus and Miriam the sister of Aaron to be one and the same. (See 19: 28), or, that the descent of table at the request of the disciples of Our Lord Jesus (5: 113-115) is nothing but a travesty of the Eucharist (Noeldeke &c). We will not say a word in reply, for we think it degrading to join issues with men who pretend so much ignorance or the world so ignorant as to give weight to such silly things. For the latter a mere translation of the verses is sufficient. Verse 113 says that the disciples asked Our Lord if God *was able* to send down on them a table of food. Having witnessed so many miracles almost daily they could not possibly have asked if God *was able* to do this very trivial thing. What they asked for was whether God would arrange, for his sake, to make a constant or recurring miracle of this kind for them *i. e.* after his being taken away from them. This is made clear in the prayer of Our Lord

who prays (verse 113) that it may be ever recurring feast for them to the end. God says (verse 115) that this will be done but if any show ingratitude they will be punished. The commentators (as see Qummi's Comm) say the table of food used to descend on the Christians till corruption took hold of the Christian society. What shadow of connection has this with the Eucharist in which the pious Christians eat loaf of bread and drink wine calling the one the body and the other the blood of their Christ? Clearly we cannot expect to find everything in the few short books of the New Testament but we do find a reminiscence (if not actual perversion) of this descent of food on Christians and its abolition. In Acts Chap. 10: 9-16 we have account of Peter getting into trance while praying in hunger. A table-cloth containing diverse sorts of things descended from heaven and a voice came "Rise Peter, kill and eat." But he refused saying he never ate common or unclean things. The voice then came "What God has cleansed that call thou not common." Still he persisted in his refusal, and this being repeated thrice the table was raised up to Heaven. The story seems contrived to make all things lawful for Christians to eat, against the views of Peter and in accordance with Paul's teachings. But the form of it suggests that underlying this there was a reminiscence of the time when tables of food used to descend from Heaven. A discussion of this must be reserved for notes on the appropriate verses.

We must now conclude this rather lengthy discussion. It is, much of it, devoid of any value, but has been forced upon us by attacks of Christian writers who assume that everything not found in their received Scriptures is necessarily baseless, a notion wholly unintelligible to us. However, we are glad that in this connection we have had occasion to deal with *nearly all*—what should I call it—strictures they have passed on the historical verses of the Quran.

We are now in a position to consider the important objection raised by the Christian controversialists (Muir, Sell &c.) to the Muslim position regarding the Jewish and Christian Scriptures—namely that the Quran itself apparently bears witness to their genuineness. Thus see 3: 85, 87, 5: 47, 3: 44, 5: 50. 7: 156, 9: 112, 48: 29, 61: 6 &c. &c.

It is argued that, however much their past history might make the authenticity of these books doubtful, the Mussalmans have no right to take up that position as their Quran calls them light and truth, and appeals to them for the truth of its teachings, and prides itself to be a testifier of the truth in them (2: 88, 85, 91, 3: 2, 34, 4: 50 &c.), and claims

in one place to be a watcher over them (*mubahinanan alaihi*) from which it is argued (by Sell &c.) that the Mussalmans should regard these books as not only not corrupt but positively incorruptible. It is easy to show that, whatever the history of these books might have been in the past, these books are substantially the same as they were in the 6th and 7th century A D, and so the Mussalmans have no right to reject them. As to the charge of corrupting their texts they say it is vaguely worded in the Quran; the sayings of the Prophet which say this explicitly they dispute as late and apocryphal.

In answer to all this it is sufficient to say that no one doubts that the vast mass of traditions (*Hadiths*) which fills whole libraries of Islamic literature contains much, very much, that is baseless and downright false, yet no one could say that it was not light or guidance—indeed, next to the Quran, it is the light and the guidance. The mere fact that it contains a large mingling of baseless things does not deprive it of the character of being a light and guidance. Indeed we may go further and say that even that which is baseless and false is light in some sense. It may embody the spirit of what is truth—baseless stories of miracles may be witness of the conviction that the Prophet did show a vast number of miracles. They may also be light in the sense in which modern Biblical Scholars, convinced of the baselessness of the Scriptures and their records, still regard them as sacred—as a record of man's changing beliefs and convictions. The words, "They change words from their places after knowing them (5: 42)" &c. have no reference to what was already done—clearly it is only the Jews of the Prophet's day, those with whom the Prophet had to deal, who were charged in these words. Granting that *they* did not actually corrupt the Scriptures which they found, they only mis-interpreted it, altering words from their context, that does not prove or even imply that their texts were not already corrupt—their forefathers several centuries back might have corrupted the scriptures already, may be through perversity, though probably through thoughtlessness, ignorance, or indolence. It was this thoughtlessness, ignorance and indolence that has led to additions and alterations on the part of editors of the older sources so that they are kept undistinguished from the texts without any sense of responsibility in the matter. As to the Quran being a guard over these Scriptures (*Muhaimin*) it is guard over them only in the sense in which it stands guarantee of its own integrity. In either case there is no guarantee what irresponsible men may do with them, but the spiritual light that the Quran has creates some men who get access to the true Scriptures in all their purity.

To others like us, not so well-gifted, it gives the substance of those Scriptures. Among the Jews and Christians, it acts as a preventive against further corruption by making permanent the elements of truth they contain. None knows what might have been the state of Judaic and Christian Scriptures at the hands of men like Gnostics and Kabbalists.

But we can go further. If we can show:

(a) that from the first the Torah was different from the books now ascribed to Moses and was recognized as distinct from these writings, whose authorship and editorship, complex as it is, is wholly unknown;

(b) that these writings were originally traditional lore and were formerly not regarded as sacred. It was only gradually that they came to be regarded as sacred;

(c) that the original Torah came to be neglected by indolence, partly because it, or the substance of it, was incorporated in these writings, or believed to have been so incorporated them.

Then it remains possible that the original Torah may have been with some Jews—as one or other of the many esoteric, hidden treatises which they are well known to have possessed but kept to themselves.

Now to prove the first is very easy. We know that the law of Moses was so short that it was ordered that the whole of it be carved on the altar of the temple. When discovered by Hilkiah in the reign of Josiah, whatever genuineness may be attributed to this very doubtful discovery—it was so short that it was directed to be read twice a day. This proves that, as known to the people at the time these books were written, the Law of Moses was a very small tractate, not the bulky books that we have now. If the law discovered then by Hilkiah can be, as is believed, identified with Deuteronomy, the book that goes by that name is a vast amplification of it. Now is it impossible that the small tractate which was certainly preserved for some time and then magnified might have continued to exist with some Jews as secret treatise?

For the second I have only to quote the *Encyclopedia Britannica* 11th Ed. (article by Rev. Bennet and Adney) "And internal evidence points to the conclusion that the Law could scarcely have been completed, and accepted formally, as a whole, as Canonical before 444 B. C. (cf. Neh. VIII—X); that the "prophets" were completed and so recognized about 250 B. C., and the Hagiographia between 150 and 100 B. C. (see further Ryle's Canon of the Old Testament)."

The third is obvious. The only reason for neglecting the original small tractate of such importance can only be that it was believed to be somehow contained or incorporated in the more bulky books.

Thus it is not impossible that copies of the original might have existed, though concealed by some and not cared for by others and it may be that it was to those originals that the Quran might have referred as light, guidance &c. Thus even from the fruitless, controversial point of view the contention of these missionary writers against the believers in the Quran cannot stand.

THE HOLY QURAN.



SURAH III.

ALE IMRAN (FAMILY OF IMRAN.)

Revealed at Medina ; 199 verses.

SECTION 1.

The Torah and Gospel afford a guidance to Quranic truth. Like them it has with its plain decisive teachings certain figurative verses which it is given only to those well-rooted in knowledge to understand fully. A prayer for continuance in guidance.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful God, the Merciful.

1. Eliph, Lam, Mim (*A. L. M.*)

2. God! There is no God but He. The Living, the Self-subsisting by whom all things subsist.

3. With truth hath He sent down unto thee the Book confirming that which was before it. And He sent down the Torah and Evangel aforetime, a guidance for the people, and He sent down the Distinction (*Furqan*). Verily for those who believe not in the signs of God is a severe punishment. For God is Mighty, the Lord of retribution.

4. God—surely nothing is hidden from Him in the Earth or in the Heaven.

5. He it is who shapeth you in the wombs as He pleaseth. There is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

6. He it is who hath sent down to thee 'the Book'; some of its verses are decisive (*Muhkamat*)—these are the basis (*Ar Umm* mother) of the Book—and others are allegorical (*mutashabihat*, lit dubious, figurative). Then as for those in whose hearts is a crookedness they go after that which is

dubious therein, seeking to create mischief, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation, but none knoweth its interpretation save God and those firmly rooted in knowledge. These say : we believe in it ; All is from our Lord. But none do mind except those having understanding.

7. Our Lord ! Turn not our hearts after that Thou hast guided us, and give us grace from before Thee in mercy ; for verily Thou ! Thou art the great bestower.

8. Our Lord ! Thou wilt surely gather all mankind on the day about which there is no doubt. Verily God will not fail (*His*) promise.

Bismillah. For preferring this translation see note in Supp.

A.L.M. See note on these letters the *Huruf muqattaat* as they are called in the beginning of Surah II (Vol 1). From Ency : Britt (11th Ed). we learn that Noeldeke has after all given up his view that these were initials of the persons with whom these Surahs were found at the time of collection. He has now fallen on a view similar to that of some old *Ulema* who thought that these letters were put in at the beginning of Surahs as an appeal to people to show the wonder of the new miracle that is given to the world in the Quran. It has nothing but these ordinary letters which everybody uses yet the composition is a miracle, Noeldeke, of course, would not put it that way. He would say that the Prophet believed that letters of the alphabet had a sort of magical power in them, which could combine to such a wondrous effect in a literary composition. We hope few would go so far as that in their estimate of the Prophet's culture and general intelligence.

This conjecture (whichever way it is taken) may be said to be borne out by the fact that, except two all the Surahs which begin with these letters open with some such words as ; This is the Book, ' A Revelation from God' or the like—in the present third Surah this is in the second verse. This coincidence is certainly remarkable and must have some meaning. But we observe also that in the Surahs which have the same letters to them there is a unity, likeness or affinity, of spirit, tone, style, diction, so that the verses of these Surahs can be interchanged from the one to the other, which is not usually possible in the Quran owing to wide differences in the tone and diction of the various Surahs. The beginning

with H. M. are almost of the same literary character—identical in spirit, tone, style and diction. So too are the present and the preceding (2nd) Surahs—beginning with *A.L.M.* almost indistinguishable from each other. Surahs which are markedly different from each other have quite different letters; such as *Q; S; K.H.Y. A.S., Y.S., T.H., N. &c.* You cannot possibly mistake the verse of one of these Surahs for the other. In Surahs agreeing in some letters and differing in others such as *A.L.R., A.L.M. S.* there is both perceptible unity and perceptible difference in subject, spirit, tone and diction. The three Meccan Surahs beginning with *A.L.M.* differ from the 2nd and 3rd Surahs (Medina ones) only in legal passages. Thus we see that the letters have much more in them than is assigned to them in the above theory. Knowing that it is the spirit which governs the changes of style and diction in the Quran we see that they might be taken as index of the spirit in which the Revelation was coming. Since it is the spirit which is directly connected with the Revelation (see note to 2: 1) it is no wonder that these letters are always followed by some reference to the Revelation. This much we can see who are blind to the meaning of these letters, how much more must they be to them to whom the Revelation was given and who knew what these symbols stand for.

Verse 2. Ibn Ishaq says that over 80 verses from the beginning of this Surah were revealed about the Christians of Najran whose embassy to the Prophet is described in note to verse 54. So also other commentators—(Mawahib, Siraj &c). As it is the verses of Surah are much altered in position. The whole of sections 2 and 3 have certainly no reference to them. So too Sec. 8 refers to the Jews. Some verses may have been lost. However, it is probable that the seven verses we have before us in this first section were revealed in their connection, and so it is perhaps right to regard them as having a side reference at least to the errors of the Christians. It is perhaps for this reason that in this opening verse, in preference to the other hundred attributes of God, which could be mentioned stress is laid on the two attributes of God, the Ever-living (*Hai*) and the Self subsisting by whom all things subsist (*Qayyum*) “which deal a death-blow to the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ, because birth and death do not entitle him to claim these attributes.”

The obvious absurdity of the doctrine has led to subtle speculations in which the doctrine is vapourised or etherised by means of subtle distinctions and a great deal of metaphysical jargon, which it is presumptuous for us to pretend to understand when they themselves do not claim to understand it. Moreover there is no agreement in the thoughts of the various theologians. A history of the numerous conceptions advocated

may be read in various books—one of the best is 'A History of the Deity of Christ' published by the Unitarian Association. The most popular form of the belief is that sought to be vindicated in 'God as Triune' by Gairdner (C. L. S. Madras) in which God is taught to be a sort of *spiritual* organism, having members as the living organism has members, which can be called organs only so long as united and inter-related to each other in the whole organism. And so God is One, but has members having different functions for each. Christ, it must be understood, has a mysterious double nature, only one of which bestowed later in life, is God, or part of God or member of Godhead. We cannot stop to consider this or any other of the 'mysteries' of Christianity; we confess we cannot, for we cannot understand or form any proper notion of them, but, whatever the conception may be, we assert, let us say hope, that this verse, which will be readily accepted verbally, is sufficient to give a *coup de grace* to it.

'There is no God but He'. Who? That whom reasoning from nature and other arguments points to. No other God is known to us and it is unphilosophical to assume any. That very reasoning which leads us to God tells us that He is Necessary Existence, Infinite, Perfect. If God is an organism it must be finite every way in the nature of things. The members must have separate functions because of inadequacy of each to do other functions, and of the whole to work, or really be, anything without these separate members. None is infinite or perfect, and none is necessary existence. So none is God.

Hai is Living, that is knowing and acting freely without any limitations on these functions. An organism cannot be called perfectly living, for whatever it does it does because of parts which are not in themselves infinite and perfect.

z is intensive of *Qaim* and is used only of God. It means one self-existent and by whom other things exist. It is strange that Rodwell renders this word Merciful, with which it has not even etymological connection. Now saying that God is Self-existent means that He is not subject to the Law of Sufficient Reason, else He would need a cause and so not be Self-subsistent. Anything having members with separate functions must be subject to the Law of Sufficient Reason, as there must be a sufficient reason why this member has a certain speciality, not shared by the others.

Some traditions say that the great name of God is contained in this verse, meaning that the verse is sufficient to give a man a perfect conception of God if he thoroughly *realizes* the conception that is given therein.

Verse 3. Kitab. "The Book." As explained in note on the first verse of the preceding Surah (*Al-Baqarah*, see vol I) the book stands for the Word of God, Revelation as a whole. Particularly the Living Word of God as explained therein. It is distinguished here from *Furqan* which as we know elsewhere (see chapter 25) is another name for the Holy Quran. But for some difference of meaning, however slight, the two could not be given separately. This tends further to support the highly spiritual significance of the word contended for in the note referred to in that Surah. It may be added that as explained in *Safi* (Introduction) the word Book is used in the Quran in the widest of senses; in fact whatever can be committed to writing is called a book in the Quran. *Qummi* says the "Book is that in the Revelation which is testified to by former scriptures—an idea based apparently on *Zalika* "That's" in the verse referred to (2: 1), one explanation of the word being that the "Book" there is that which was foretold by former prophets. Anyway this significance is included in what we have said, and is no way inconsistent with it. In fact what the prophets foretold was that Revelation would be given to Our Holy Prophet, and the Holy Quran was part of that Revelation.

Taurat stands for Torah "The Law given to Moses." It does not stand for Pentateuch as we know it, though it may be substantially contained in it. Taking the books to be uncorrupted, which obviously they are not (see Introduction), the *Taurat* would be only that portion which professes to be the commandments of God as revealed to Moses. The rest can be *Taurat* only in the sense of being inspired or based on Revelation. Similarly *Injil* 'Evangel' does not stand for the Gospel according to Matthew, Mark &c, but the original Evangelion on which these are based (see Introduction). It was that which was referred to by St. Paul (Galatians 1: 6 & 7) as under the fear of being changed.

Furqan. For the ordinary simple meaning of the word see note on 2: 53. Rodwell, however, says it was borrowed from the Jews, it being commonly used in the Talmud in the Hebrew meaning of deliverance redemption. Gieger says it is used in the Quran in the Hebrew sense. His words are:—"This is a very important word, and it is one which in my opinion has till now been quite misunderstood. In its primary meaning it occurs in the 8th Surah: 'O true believers! if ye fear God, He will grant you a deliverance (*furqan*) and will expiate your sins &c.'" Elpherar gives five different explanations to this verse, each as unsuitable as Wahl's translation, and the passage seems to me to be truly classical for the primary meaning of the word. This meaning appears

also in Surā VIII. 42, where the victory of Beder is called the day of deliverance and in Surā II. 181 where this name is given to the month of Ramadhan as the month of redemption and deliverance from sin. Mohammed entirely diverging from Jewish ideas, intended to establish his religion as that of the world in general; further he condemned the earlier times altogether calling them times of ignorance. He declared his creed to have been revealed through God's apostles from the earliest times, and to have been only renewed and put into a clearer and more convincing form by himself. Hence the condition of any one outside his belief must have seemed to him a sinful one, and the divine revelation granted to himself and his predecessors appeared to him in the light of deliverance from that sinful life which could only lead to punishment; and therefore he calls revelation itself in many places Furqan as in many he calls it *rahmat* mercy. In some passages he applies the term to the Quran (Surah 3: 2, 25 title and verse 1) and in others to the Mosaic revelation. (Surahs 2: 50, 21: 49). In this way all the passages fit in under the primary signification of the word, and there is no need to guess at a different meaning for each."

Now it is incorrect to say that we have to "guess at a different meaning for each place" where it is used. In our note on 2: 53 we have explained how the simple Arabic meaning of distinction is applicable in all cases, distinction making it patent to all, not only to or in view of those favoured with it as would alone be possible if it were understood as deliverance. The Quran is distinction making truth, true doctrines clearly distinct from the erroneous, unlike the Gospel which teaches so little about God even that it is a controversy to this day whether unity or trinity is the doctrine taught there. So it is unlike law of Moses which is silent on such an important article of belief as resurrection, or future reward and punishment. (This is of course said of the books as they are before us. The Quran says that the law as given to Moses was Furqan as much as the Quran is 2: 53, 25: 1). The battle of Beder with its many miracles was a distinction making it clear to all which of the two parties was specially favoured by God and granted assistance by Him. The month of Ramazan makes the very faces of believers glow with light of holiness, to say nothing of the powers of conversion and deliverance from sin and other miracles of faith which the individual experiences in himself. It is true that to the believers there should be a sense of deliverance in all these cases, as explained by Gieger, but it was not entirely as such that appeal was made to the world.

Now the question comes whether Furqan was wrong as an Arabic word and was wantonly borrowed from the Jews in the right Hebrew

sense as Gieger insists, or in a mistaken sense due to confusion with the Arabic root as others seem to think. The answer to the first is that Arabic being an etymological language it lends very easily to the creation of new forms from the ordinary roots on the analogy of those already in existence. *Furqan* is a derivative from the root *farq* (to distinguish) as *Quran* is a derivative from *qara* to read. When it was desired to have a name that would impress this particular characteristic of the Holy Book and it was also sought that it should be something fixed for it, and not in ordinary use for other things the best way was to create the new form on the analogy of *Quran* &c. The answer to the second is that even if this were deliberately done, and to strengthen it, add—even if the derivation as explained above were not correct in Arabic, even then far from that being an objection to it it would show the great literary genius of him who did it. We have said in the Introduction that in its selection of words the *Quran* uses the most *suggestive* words that can be available. Supposing there was desired a word meaning distinction any form of the root *farq* or any equivalent word would have done it. But it was seen that in the allied Hebrew language, a word similar to a possible derivative from *farq* was used—and was coming into use in Arabic through the Arabian Jews—in the sense of deliverance, which sense would well join up with and give a new well desirable meaning to it; it was then the best course to adopt that form so that the word may suggest both meanings, or rather both meanings may be blended together, and the effect on the reader may be that of both combined. Thus there is not the slightest question of borrowing, the question rather is of an artistic genius displayed in the selection of words. To the parrot's cry of borrowing it is sufficient to answer that the word was first used in a Meccan Surah where there were no Jews to appreciate it, on the contrary all would be displeased and ready to condemn it. There are a plenty of words in Arabic for deliverance—*najat* &c.

Verse 4. But Jesus did not know what was going on behind his back. That was as a man, it will be said. What then about the time of resurrection? See his own words in Mark 13: 32. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the father." Granting, for argument's sake that he had two natures, divine and human, the omniscience he *necessarily* had as God ought to have its effect on his human mind.

Verse 5. *Kaifa yashauu* 'As He likes,' not only in what shape He likes, but also in what way or manner He likes, however it pleaseth Him. He may create you in the usual way by the union of male and female

elements, or He may create you out of female elements alone, as in parthenogenesis which is common in insects, bees &c. That this is not known among ourselves is sufficient for some men to think that it is impossible, and since miracles are discredited even the mention of that word is taboo. Yet freaks of nature abound everywhere. At the present day we know of an oyster that changed its sex three times, of a fish that changes its sex much as a chameleon changes its colour. We also know that certain internal diseases among hens produce the opposite external features of cocks in them. (All these can be read of in recent issues of Illustrated Weekly of India 1931). We know also that mere intensity of thought is able to produce the most remarkable physical effects on the body—it may go so far as produce bleeding impressions of hand or cross on arm, chest or elsewhere (see Barret's Christian Science). If a limited creature's own spiritual force is able to do so much, who can say that a divine afflatus sent through angels of God cannot effect a radical transformation in biological functions in any part of a woman's body? It would be a presumption in us to limit the possibilities of science—and scientists are loud upon this—who would, then, limit the possibilities of spiritual force, the powers of which are quite unexplored, what to say of those which may come directly from God?

Verse 6. This verse has been commented upon in the Introduction. The *Muhkamāt* are those clear, plainly expressed verses about the meaning of which there can be no doubt—at least to men of average sense. Such are the verses about cardinal articles of faith, Unity of God &c or directions about religious practices, or lawful and unlawful things. The *Mutashabihāt* are those the meaning of which is more or less dubious whether this be so owing to their being susceptible of different meanings or having some meaning other than the literal one, being couched in figurative language as 'the hand of God is above their hands' &c. or the meaning may be quite obscure owing to our lack of knowledge connecting the words or letters used as symbols with the thought or thoughts they are meant to symbolize. Both are relative terms. Hair-splitting can make the plainest verse full of problems on which even the wisest may never agree; and, to say nothing of merely figurative expressions, even the most obscure *Mutashabihāt* as the mysterious letters at the beginning of Surah may be clear to some who have the privilege of a higher degree of knowledge than we have. In either case recourse is had to *other knowledge* in the light of which the meaning becomes clear. While rejecting the literal meaning as inapplicable we see also the full applicability of the figure used, whether this be by the use of common knowledge or

intelligence, or some deeper knowledge or higher intelligence to which we are not privileged.

The right meaning of the *Matashabihat*, the verse says, is known only to God and those "well-rooted in knowledge," (*Rasikhuna fil ilm*). Who are these 'well-rooted in knowledge'? In a loose sense the word may be applied to any learned man, and these may indeed suffice for the simpler figurative expressions. They may be able to see clearly that the language is figurative and may see the meaning that is sought to be conveyed. It is more difficult to see the full applicability of the figure, for there may be a special sense in which the expression may also be literally true, and that may be the reason for using the figurative expression at all. Thus anybody might be sure that the light which appeared to Moses (7:139) was not God or manifestation of God—God could not possibly manifest Himself in that or any other form. Yet as a mere figure of speech this can only mean that Moses got an intense consciousness of the Transcendental Being which at ordinary times he did not have. The rest of the story shows this is not the meaning. Moses did really see something which was *fitly* called his Lord. What was it? Being a matter of fact, no one, however learned or advanced in intellectual capacity, can know of it—with certainty at least, by the mere exercise of his thinking capacity or erudition even added to it. But let that go. The *Hurufe Muqattaat* at the beginning of the Surahs, and some other expressions in the Quran, are clearly hopeless to be elucidated by any method whatever. This shows that for this class of passages at least there are special *Rasikhun fil ilm* having means of knowledge to which we have no access. Indeed the revelation by an All-wise God of such obscure passages makes the existence of such divine interpreters a certainty.

Seeing this difficulty, which almost proves Imamate, a large section of the Sunni divines make a pause after God and make *Rasikhuna fil ilm* the subject of 'say' in the next clause. And this may be said to be the received opinion in all Sunni churches at the present day (except the Motazalites). They go to extremes in this. They say we believe in God having a hand but refrain from forming any notion or conception of it. Imam Ahmad was the most pronounced in this (Milalo Nihal, Shahrastani) and so are the Wahabis who are greatly influenced by his teachings. It is easy to see how this, which was only a spirit of caution in the masters (however uncalled for), led to anthropomorphism in lesser and more careless minds of which something is said in the Introduction. However, as usual, not a few of the Sunni divines agree with the Shias in this respect. This was not only the view of Sahabas like Ibn Abbas, Ibn Masud, Utay 'bn Kaab,

and Tabein such as Mujahid, but Ibn Masud and Ufay 'bn Kaab actually read the words this way : *In tawilahu illa indallahi wal Rasikhuna fil ilm.* 'Its interpretation is not with any but God and those well-rooted in knowledge.' The Shafite Sunnis generally take this view, and the celebrated divines Nawawi and Ibn Hajib say this is the more correct view. The obvious objection to that construction of the passage which makes the understanding of *Mutashabihat* confined to God is that there was no use or purpose in revealing such verses at all? Unless, of course, that they say that the interpretation was also inspired to the Prophet and the *Rasikhun fil ilm*, which again brings them over to the Shia views.

The divergent views have led to serious persecutions under intolerant Caliphs. The sufferings of the Motazalites under the early orthodox Caliphs and those of the orthodox under Mutasim, Vasiq &c. are well-known and may be read of in any history. The thing had started with the first Caliphs. Abubecker, who never let any occasion slip to make an impression of his piety and God-fearingness on the people, scrupled to give the meanings of even the simplest words in the Quran. '*Jarriidul Quran*' 'let Quran alone' was the watchword of Omar. Several stories are related of his severely punishing persons found reflecting over the obscure portions of the Quran. One may be read in the *Mawahib* (in loco). No wonder that infidelity increased secretly in Muslim ranks.

It is interesting that the Sunnis have several traditions to the effect that by the persons who persistently go after *Mutashabihat* are the meant Kharijites who fought against Our Lord Ali (Ibn Kafir, *Mawahib in loco*). There are quite a number of prophecies in Sunni traditions about these people and their religious character; so there remains little doubt about their authenticity. What these men actually did was to deduce lawful or unlawful things from principles inferred from doctrinal verses. Thus from 'No command *hukm* but God's' (6 : 57, 12 : 40) they inferred that human government is infidelity; so also the arbitration they had pressed Our Lord Ali to accept at the battle of Siffin.

Ummul Kitab. The clear, decisive verses *Muhkamat* are said to be the mother of the book, that is the main and fundamental teaching; the 'book' being here used in the sense of teaching. Elsewhere the term is used of the Preserved Book containing the Quran.

'Seeking its interpretation' that is seeking to give it their own interpretation.

'They say we believe in it : all is from Our Lord' so that there can be disagreement between the two. The *Mutashabihat* must be interpretable

so as to be consistent with the *Muhkamat*. This gives a clue to judge of various interpretations suggested where they appear to be more than mere guesses. Mere guess work in the matter of *Mutashabihat* is to be condemned.

NOTE.—‘ This subject ’ of *Mutashabihat* ‘ is very appropriately dealt with here as a prelude to a controversy with the Christians who attribute divinity to Jesus and uphold the doctrine of Atonement by blood on the basis of certain ambiguous words or allegorical statements without heeding the fundamental principles established by the earlier prophets and Jesus himself in the vast majority of his sayings as reported in the Gospels.’

The Ahmadi commentator says quite rightly, ‘ This attitude which seeks to give ambiguous and allegorical words a significance opposed to the general principles of the book it is meant to interpret is the chief reason of most of the erroneous beliefs prevailing in the world,’ but he adds, ‘ The same error lies at the root of some miraculous feats attributed to Jesus Christ by the Muslims themselves.’ To which it is to be said that miracles should first be proved to be ‘ opposed to the general principles of the book ’ and then the blame for it should fall on the Author of the Quran who knowing that certain wrong beliefs were current among the people reiterated these things in words which could only be held to be intended to confirm them.

Verse 8. As his bent of mind is the Ahmadi commentator reads in these words a reference to the gathering of hostile forces in the battles (!). “ The verses that follow ” he says “ leave no doubt. See particularly verse 11.” We have said in the beginning that the order of verses here is much disarranged.

SECTION 2.

Prophecy of the vanquishment of the unbelievers. A sign in the battle of Beder. Heavenly life. Unity of God the basis of all religions and hence Islam is the true religion.

9. Verily those who disbelieve—neither shall their wealth nor their children avail them aught against God, and these it is who are the fuel of the fire.

10. After the wont (*laab*, going about) of the people of Pharoah and those before them ; they gave the lie to our signs ; so God siezed them for their iniquities ; and God is severe in requiting (evil).

11. Say to those who disbelieve : ye shall be vanquished and driven on to hell ; and evil is the resting-place.

12. Indeed there was a sign for you in the two hosts (which) met together in encounter ; one party fighting in the way of God and the other unbelieving, seeing them twice as many as themselves with the sight or the eye ; And God aideth with His aid whom He pleaseth ; surely in this there is a lesson for those who have sight.

13. The love of desires—women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver and welbred horses and cattle and tilth, is made to seem fair to men ; this is the provision of the life of this world, but God ! With Him is the good goal (of life).

14. Say, shall I tell you of that which is better than these ? For those who fear (God) are gardens with their Lord, 'neath which flow rivers, to abide in them, and pure wives, and God's pleasure and God beholdeth His servants.

15. Those who say : Our Lord ! surely we believe, so forgive us our faults and keep us from the punishment of the fire ;

16. The patient, and the truthful, and the obedient, and those who spend (in benevolence) and those who ask forgiveness in the last hours of the night.

17. God beareth witness that there is no God but He, and (so do) the angels and those possessed of knowledge, standing by Justice—No God but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

18. Surely the true religion with God is Islam, and those to whom the Book had been given did not differ but

after that knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves, and whoever believeth not in the signs of God, then surely God is quick in reckoning.

19. But if they dispute with thee, say, I have submitted my face (entirely) to God and (so doth) every one who followeth me: and say to those who have been given the Book and the unlearned people (*Ummis*): Do ye submit yourselves. So if they submit then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back then upon thee is only the delivery (of the message) and God beholdeth (His) servants.

9 to 11. A clear prophecy of the vanquishment of the opponents of the Holy Prophet. Though the Quraish had suffered a crushing defeat in the battle of Beder they could yet muster heavy forces against the Muslims, who were yet small in numbers, and they had sworn to take their revenge upon them. And the whole of Arabia was prepared to side with them in their attempt to put an end to the nuisance of the new religion. Nothing but inspiration from God could have emboldened the Prophet to predict in this manner. The state of the Musalmans was such that they were warned not to leave off their armour even at the time of prayer see 4: 103.

'Fuel of the fire.' If no revolt against nature can go without consequences, how much more any revolt against the nature of things and the object of creation. By the nature of their spiritual character the infidels will create the physical torments with which they will be surrounded.

Verse 10. *Daab* is generally interpreted as meaning 'manner' or 'wont,' but it more properly signifies 'striving hard' or 'labouring.' The Quraishites were actively busy in preparing themselves for a decisive battle and were also intriguing with others to make war on the Prophet on their own account. Thus Abu Sufyan came hidden to Medina and instigated the Jews to take up arms against him.

Verse 11 & 12. These verses refer to the Jews of Bani Qaniqaa. This was one of the settlements of the Jews in the precincts of Medina. The victory of Beder having greatly alarmed the Jews they were not slow to see what they could do to prevent the growing power of the Musalmans. To do what they could to inflame the Quraish to a speedy revenge Kaab 'bn Ashraf went to Mecca with a number of people and

sang verses mourning for the honour of the Qurraish and the noble chiefs who were killed in the battle. From the other side Abu Sufyan coming with his men to fulfil his vow (for which see note on verse 120) came hidden to Medina and staying with Salam 'bn Mishkam was given a hearty welcome by the Jews. Plans were discussed and mutual help was promised. The hypocrites who were a powerful party among the Musalmans themselves were also intimate with the Jews and joined in the intrigue. The developments were going on cautiously. One of the simplest plans was to set the two great tribes of Ansars, Aus and Khazraj against each other, and it was easy affair as these two tribes had always been fighting and it was only their recent conversion that had made them united. In a fair where a number of people of either tribe had collected and were talking the Jews cleverly turned the conversation on some of the old quarrels. As was expected quarrel broke out and it soon came to the drawing out of the swords. The Prophet, however, heard in time about it and came immediately on the spot and conciliated the two factions. Verse 148 below is said to have been revealed on this occasion. Then it happened that a Muslim woman having gone to a Jew's shop a Jew quietly came behind her and cut off her garment in such a way that when she rose she was quite naked,—and at this sight of her shame and helplessness they began to laugh and clap their hands. On this occasion the Prophet came and warned the Jews almost in the words of these verses that they should beware lest the fate that overtook the infidels at Beder should befall them too. But they were furious and began to say, "O Mohammed. Dost thou think us to be men of thy people. Let that not deceive thee. Thou hadst come to face a people who knew nothing of fighting. By God when *we* will fight thee thou wilt know we are men." Saying this they returned the treaty that the Prophet had entered into with them. The Prophet gave them no reply but returning to Medina sent his men to besiege their forts. They were not able to resist or sustain the siege for a fortnight even. As prophesied in verse 107 below neither the other Jews (Bani Nazeer and Bani Quraiza) in their immediate neighbourhood, nor the infidels of Mecca or other heathen, nor the hypocritical Musalmans did anything to help them. Only the hypocrite leader Abdullah 'bn Obay plagued the Prophet with intercession on their behalf; and yielding to his requests the Prophet ordered them to be exiled taking whatever goods they could carry with them.

Though in all this the Prophet himself seems not to have done anything to provoke the Jews to action, yet the course of events was providentially in keeping with his policy (explained in note 2: 190 Vol. I) that the infidels should be provoked to action as soon as possible with

such forces as they could command at the instant without having time to make a grand alliance of all parties and tribes to annihilate the handful of believers. After this event some private murders were made such as those of Kaab 'bn Ashraf, Salam 'bn Abil Haqiq to rouse the opponents if possible to action, but it was long before any could muster courage to do so. We will give details in appropriate places.

Verse 12. The reference is to the battle of Beder which we will describe in its proper place in Sura VIII. Which parties the 'they' and 'them' refer to in 'they saw the unbelievers to be twice as many as themselves' is not clear, but the probable meaning is that the Muslims saw the unbelievers to be twice as many as themselves. This statement does not contradict that made in 8:44 "And when He showed them to you, when you met, as few in your eyes and He made you appear little in their eyes." The actual number of the infidels was over three times that of the Muslims, so even when the latter saw them twice themselves they saw them less than they really were. The reason for their seeing them twice as many and not more was that in 8:66 Muslims were told that they should be able to overcome twice their number of infidels.

Verse 13. Mark the word, 'love of desires,' i.e. desired things. The desire of the good things of the earth is not in itself bad: it is indeed an important element in human life and progress. Asceticism, in the sense of dislike of these things is reprobated in Islam. It is only the "love of" or attachment to these passions, which would make it difficult for man to part with them in view of graver duties, that is reprobated. That attachment must be cut off to the very root. As to the things themselves, it is the duty of man to wish for having good wives and children and to love them really, as intensely as possible. It is one of the greatest difficulties of faith that it sets up a hierarchy of emotions and requires complete subjugation of the lower to the higher. The lower ones are not to be crushed down and annihilated; they must be kept within limits so as to be ready to be sacrificed at any instant. This is infinitely more difficult than the giving up of the world which is popularly admired. In short the passion for these earthly things is divine, it is only attachment to it that is condemned.

Verse 14. The desires being not in themselves bad they will continue in the fuller life in heaven which is only a continuation of the present life (see note on 2:25) only much more perfect and developed. There will be nothing of the love of desires as explained in the note above, so as to cause pain in face of higher desires or duties. Ascending from this, which is the minimum that comes to every one saved, there are

infinite degrees of spiritual perfection in the form of intensity of higher desires heading to a complete absorption in love of God and contemplation of His pleasure. It is this that will constitute the infinitely various ranks and grades in Heaven and we read that many will not even look at *hours* enjoying the society of Our Lord Husain. In the verse we see that God's pleasure comes last as the culminating point of bliss in Heaven. This pleasure is extended to all in varying degrees according to their merits in earthly life with which they begin life—their degree of spirituality—in heaven. They may progress upwards in love and devotion though not with positive pain and trouble as in this earthly life. Also contrary to this earthly life there is no fear of going down if one does not go up, a stationary moral condition is possible, though not desirable, and, it is hoped, it will be rare.

It must not be supposed that the willingness of higher souls to part with their bliss in view of higher duties is a mere capacity only seeing that there will be no higher duties involving positive pain. Though we have no definite teachings on this point it may be that some while yet remaining in Heaven may still work as prophets in some other worlds that may be created. Was not the holy soul of the Prophet already in Heaven when he was working and suffering all sorts of persecutions here on earth? A hundred traditions may be cited to show that he was. Human personality is a wonderfully complex thing; and one part may serve as conscious self in a physical body here and the rest may be soaring in the heights of heaven. This is difficult to understand, but the traditions all say it, and it has a powerful mass of evidence in its favour in spiritualism and psychical research. So these higher souls may voluntarily take up arduous duties involving any amount of pain—not indeed in Heaven as such, but anywhere in God's creation.

Verse 15 & 16. This is the preparation in this life for beginning life in heaven when there will be no love of desires in the sense explained. No radical change towards spirituality is to be expected unless one tries hard for it, feels real remorse for failures and receives grace, through love, from those who are already higher up in the rungs of spirituality.

Verse 17. 'God bears witness that He is One'. All that we know of God proves in itself that He is One—the very conception of God excludes the possibility of there being another God whether external to Him or as one of His parts or members.

'Standing with justice'. An unjust God could not exist for if arbitrariness could be a feature of the ultimate existence there would be

no validity for the Law of sufficient Reason, and God could not be a Necessary Existence—His Existence could not have been capable of demonstration by Reason; He could be a mere contingent existence that might or might not exist. None that beyond justice to His creation there is an absolute justice which means strict conformability of His acts to His Nature. So justice is no way inconsistent with His mercy and Benevolence, which is indeed the ruling Principle of His actions, He has written down mercy for Himself, (6 : 12).

Arguments for justice as an attribute of God can be read in any book of Shia Theology. It can be very easily seen that the contrary proposition involves that He could be either unwise or subject to wants. Also it may be said that the contrary proposition makes all action impossible. For if the act is not that which is just right there can be no limit to the wrong acts that may be done instead, and yet there would be no reason why one should be preferred above the others. It is unfortunate that the Sunnis (except the Motazalites) attach so much importance to God having power over everything that they deny justice as an attribute of God and consider it possible theoretically that He may send the pious to Hell and receive the wicked to His favour. They do not see that God could only act according to His nature. An unjust act could no way proceed from Him.

18. Islam in its essentials was the religion taught by prophets from the earliest times. Corruption may sometimes have started with genuine mistakes or misunderstandings on part of individuals, but it was always magnified receiving a communal colour by the zeal of followers inflamed by mutual hatred of each other whether that may be due to religious or political reasons. Notorious instances of the latter are the schisms of the Samaritans among the Jews and the Athanasians among the Christians.

Verse 19. Submitting oneself to God is tantamount to submitting oneself to Reason, for it is in Reason that God reveals Himself. If people agree only upon this in matters of religion there will remain no differences whatever.

SECTION 3.

The opponents of Islam shall find themselves helpless. Faith and prayer can raise Musalmans to honour and kingdom. Muslims not to look for help from their enemies. Good and evil must be followed by their respective-consequences.

20. But to those who believe not in the signs of God, and unjustly slay the prophets, and slay those men who enjoin uprightness,—announce to them a painful punishment.

21. These are they whose works come to naught in this world and in the next; and none shall they have to help them!

22. Hast thou not marked those who have received a portion of the Scriptures, when they are summoned to the Book of God, that it may judge between them, thereafter a body of them turn back are heedless and they withdraw.

23. This—because they say, “The fire shall by no means touch us, but for a few days”—and what they have forged deceiveth them in the matter of their religion.

24. Then how, when We shall assemble them together for the day of which there is no doubt, and when every soul shall be paid (in full) what it hath earned, and they shall not be wronged?

25. Say: O God, Master of all sovereignty, Thou givest dominion to whom Thou willeth and taketh away dominion from whomsoever Thou willest! Thou exaltest whom Thou willest and abasest whom Thou willest. In Thy hand is all good, (for) verily thou hast power over all things.

26. Thou causest the night to pass into the day, and Thou causest the day to pass into the night. Thou bringest the living out of the dead, and Thou bringest the

dead out of the living ; and Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou listest, without measure.

27. Let not the faithful take infidels for their friends rather than believers; whoso shall do this then he hath not of God in anything—unless (indeed) ye are afraid of them fearing : But God would have you beware of Himself ; for to God is the last wending.

28. Say whether ye hide what is in your breasts, or whether ye shew it forth, God knoweth it and He knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth ; and God hath power over all things.

29. On the day that every soul shall find present to it whatever it hath wrought of good, and (also) what it hath wrought of evil. He will fain wish that wide were the interval between it and himself ! But God would have you beware of Himself, for God is tender to (His) servants.

Verse 20. The people referred to are the Jews who have always been notorious for their wanton murder of prophets and righteous people—a charge which they themselves admitted and regretted (though of course hypocritically generally, see Matt. 23 : 30-35). See note on 2 : 63 in Vol. I. There is no doubt a side reference here to their plans to kill the Holy Prophet and the Musalmans.

Verse 21. Their works shall become null, *i. e.* fruitless in this life and in the next. “ All their attempts against the Holy Prophet shall be fruitless and they themselves shall be reduced to a condition of helplessness. And thus it was.” So the Ahmadi commentator, and he is right ; but the meaning is much more extensive. It is only good works which could be expected to bear fruit in next life and which are declared here to be nullified for them. So for this life too there is a curse attaching to them that, however much they may try, they will never have what they so longingly aspire to—kingdom for Israel—and which any other people having such diligent and well-principled people working for it could not possibly have failed to achieve. But we trust it will never be.

Good works, virtues, of any people, believers or unbelievers are never nullified, never fail to be fruitful, are sure to be rewarded both in this

life and in the next. The grossest of polythiests are sure to have their reward for their virtues in some shape, may be a reduction in their woes in the hereafter. Of Nausherwan we read that his justice will procure for him salvation. So other good works may result in total annihilation of all tortures. But this is only so far as unbelief is the result of ignorance or indolence. But those whose hearts burn with hatred against God's Holy prophets and who proceed to slay them (knowing them to be genuine apostles of God) or kill other righteous men deliberately on account of their religion—that is a thing which tends to make all their good works nullified and wasted. They cannot hope for anything.

Verse 22. The Jews have a portion of the Book, for the whole Book includes the Quran which they reject; and also they have only stray reminiscences of the Book which was given to them which is now wholly lost. The Book of God to which they were invited to settle the dispute is either the Quran or their own Law which after all had a substance of truth in it. The dispute is said to have been about the punishment for adultery which the Jews did not admit that it was stoning. In the extant versions of the Law (Leviticus 20: 10) the punishment is said to be simply *putting to death*. But John 8: 5 gives us to understand that stoning to death was the real punishment. Thus the teaching of the Prophet on this point can be seen to be borne out by the Jewish scriptures even in their present corrupted form, and there is nothing improbable in the story that the Jewish convert Abdullah 'bn Salam was able to point out a passage in the copy of the Law with them that said clearly that stoning was the real punishment prescribed for adultery. If there was any verse revealed about this punishment in the Quran it is now lost. Some Sunni traditions (all unreliable) seem to show that a verse to that effect was revealed, but was either expunged or not written down at all. See Introduction.

Verse 23. See note on 2: 80⁷ in Vol. I. Even the limited number of days they assigned for their punishment had reference more to the sins of their forefathers than to the gravity of their own sins. The forty days they would suffer are the days their ancestors had worshipped the Calf.

Verse 25 & 26. Rodwell thinks that these two verses are misplaced here. They break the continuity of thought that exists between the preceeding and succeeding verses. The Ahmadi commetator infers from them that the purport of the section as whole is that 'The Kingdom of God must depart from the House of Israel.' As usual the Sunni com-

mentators relate various occasions on which these verses are said to have been revealed—the Prophet having prayed for or foretold about conquests for his people, and the Jews and Munafiqs &c having taken him to ridicule for it.

If the verses were really revealed on some other occasion and not in connection with the preceding and succeeding verses, being merely placed there later at the instance of the Prophet, then the object seems to be to make the trend of the whole what the Ahmadi commentator thoughtfully reads in it. But the verses may have been revealed in connection with, in continuation of the verses that go before. When these verses condemning the Jews were revealed the Prophet might have thought of their temporal power and their obstruction to the cause of Islam. The answer is contained in these verses. The Musalmans should prepare their hearts for a spirit of complete resignation to His Will and should enlarge it to hope for the most inconceivable things from Him, and then all will be easy enough, for the Grace of God will abound and providence will do its work. Ibn Abbas says there is *Isme Azam* (the great Name of God) in these verses, meaning that if anyone were to pray to God with these verses, that is, having his heart filled with the spirit of these verses his prayer is sure to be granted. There is to be a recognition of God's rightful sovereignty and His right to bestow what He would on whom He likes, irrespective of any claim or desert for the same on the part of the one so favoured, so that there should be no murmur or of grudge on that account. We have no rights, no claims of any kind on God, and with it no power of our own to struggle for ourselves. All we can do is to pray to God, doing His will as His subjects and trusting that He can do the most inconceivable things for us. Nothing is impossible to Him.

Verse 27. *Aulia*, plural of *Wali* means friends or guardians, but the proviso later on 'except that ye fear them guarding' shows it is the latter here. But it may rightly stretch to friendship when it comes to true spiritual union and threatens to change religious emotions. Thus by constant association with idolaters accompanied by intense love for them a man may lose his horror for idolatry and not dislike it at all. Love, it must be remembered, is subject to the laws of association, and when one loves a man he is apt to love all connected with him, not only his relations, but also his practices, and, may be, his religion. It is clear that in such a state the man "has nothing of God" in him.

In the case of fear, real danger to life, a man may pretend anything. He may profess not only all degrees of compromising love for unbelievers,

but may, if necessity occurs, pretend their spiritual heads to be his spiritual guardians—in effect dissemble their religion. This is *Taqiyya*. This is reprobated as moral cowardice, which it may be if done on that account, but rightly done, with a resolution to plead for the truth of one's religion as one still outside its pale, it is one of the best ways of serving one's religion. It is said that like result may also be obtained by suffering persecution openly, laying up one's life for one's religion. This may be so, but this is merely appealing to the feelings of the people and may be effective in the case of any errors. Our religion does not want to grow on such sentimentalism. We only want to be heard in a cool, unprejudiced spirit, and for this there is nothing better than *Taqiyya* when prejudices get to the height of violence. See further Supp.

Verse 29. 'That there were a great duration of *time*' between him and his misdeeds. That is he would wish that by repentance he had cast away his misdeeds long ago, and they should thus have gone to oblivion.

'God makes you be cautious of Himself.' In a Sunni tradition Our Lord Jaferel Sadiq is reported to have said on this verse that 'God who knows all that is in the hearts (as stated in the previous verses) wants to see nothing in hearts but Himself (His love), so he warns people to see that they do not allow anything else to have possession of it.' It is in this way that He has tender regard for His servants, seeking that they should be perfect in holiness. The idea is that heart is given to man to be a receptacle of divine emotions only, and is virtually a property of God, which He is constantly keeping His eye over. Anything of personal attachment (which is not based on divine command) is to be felt as abominable as a wrongful misappropriation of what rightly belongs to another, especially what belongs to one's own master.

SECTION 4.

How to become the beloved ones of God. Divine choice of certain prophets and families of prophets. Mary under the guardianship of Zacharias, prayer for the birth of John the Baptist.

30. Say, if ye love God then follow me, God will love you and forgive you your faults. And God is Forgiving, Merciful.

31. Say, Obey God and the Apostle; but if they turn back, then verily God loveth not the unbelievers.

32. Verily God did choose Adam and Noah and the sons (*al*) of Abraham and the sons (*al*) of Amran above all the worlds.

33. A generation, one from the other, and God is Hearing, Knowing.

34. When the wife of Amran said 'My Lord, surely I vow to Thee what is in my womb to be devoted (to Thy service): accept therefore from me. Surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing.

35. So when she brought it forth, she said: My Lord! I have brought it forth a female—And God knew best what she brought forth—and the male is not like the female, and I have named it Mary, and commend her and her offspring into Thy protection from Satan the accursed (*Rajim*, pelted at).

36. So accepted her her Lord with a goodly acceptance, and made her grow up a goodly growing, and gave her into the charge of Zacharias. Whenever Zacharias entered the sanctuary to (see) her, he found with her food. He said: O Mary! whence comes this to thee? She said: It is from God, verily God giveth to whom He pleaseth without measure.

37. There did Zacharias pray to his Lord; he said 'My Lord! grant me from before Thee a goodly offspring (*zurriyatan tayyebatan*), verily Thou art the Hearer of prayer.'

38. Then the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary: That God giveth thee the good news of John, verifying the Word from God, and honourable and chaste, and a prophet from among the good ones.

39. He said: My Lord, How (*anna*, or when) shall there be a son to me, and old age has already come upon me and my wife is barren? He said, Even thus doth God what He pleaseth.

40. He said: My Lord! appoint a sign for me. Said He: Thy sign is that thou shalt not speak to men for three days except by signs: and remember thy Lord much and glorify Him in the evening and morning.

Verse 31. Love of God is the essence of faith without which it is practically nothing. Obedience which flows from fear of God alone—the fear of His punishment—is hardly worth anything. However commendable it may be to begin with it in dealing with persons of low culture, in itself it is ethically little better than the devil-worship of the savages. The fear of God that Islam insists upon is that based upon Love or reverence for Him. So in verse 93 below we read ‘O ye who believe, fear God as He *deserves* to be feared.’ What is required is the fear akin to the care that makes a man refrain from doing an act lest it may injure the feelings of a man he has loving regard for, very intensely, whether that be due to reverence as in the higher natures, or purely personal love in the case of the ordinary folk.

Love of God being thus the essence of faith, it is well to understand what it means, for there is nothing in which there is so much self-delusion as in love; so long as there is no trial of it every person thinks he loves quite a number of people among his friends, though when occasion comes his friendship turns out to be mere empty nothing. It is the same with love of God which every one would profess to have something of.

Now (1) love means that one should feel unpleasant in absence of the beloved. In the case of God this implies intense attachment to devotion: keeping God constantly in mind with loving emotions (2) Love must impel one to be always trying to do something to please the beloved and refrain from anything that might displease him (3) Love is subject to the laws of association. If a man loves another he must love all he loves, on *his* account. He must love his son, brother, friend. In the case of God it means generally all His creatures and specially those who are beloved of Him *par excellence*—the prophets and the Imams (4) Similarly it entails intense hatred of all known to be deliberate enemies of the beloved or his friends or relations, in the case of God, of His prophets

and other holy men. Nothing short of all this can make good the slightest claim to the love of God. The last some may demur to, but psychologically it is necessary. Love is meaningless without it. It can thus be seen that it is rather a rare gift, and so the Quran which deals mostly with ordinary believers speaks more frequently of the fear than of the love of God; but, as said above, that fear also must in a large measure be based on His love and intense regard for His pleasure.

From the above it will appear that the love of God necessarily requires love of the prophets and Imams and other holy men, in fact love of them is the measure of the love one bears to God. If it is not acute and active in their case, if there is no yearning and burning of heart in relation to them, the impression of love of God is nothing but self-delusion and should be striven to be made real. But there are other reasons why love or spiritual attachment to the prophets is necessary for the love of God to be real at all.

(1) Love of God presumes knowledge of God, else it is only love of one's own ideas. Now (a) so far as essence is concerned, God is wholly unknowable and incomprehensible. It is only the great prophets who know Him (so far as possible to any creature) by spiritual Wisdom (*Hikmat*) granted to them as a special favour of God. Any one wishing to have anything of that—the only way for him is to unite himself spiritually to these holy souls, so as to derive from them the spiritual illumination that can come in no other way. Needless to say, love is the only means and way to it. Note that without this aid loving God is not an easy matter. For the racking of the mind caused by his incomprehensibility will doubtless have its effect on the emotion created in relation to Him. We require to be greater than we are, through our Holy Prophet, in order to love God. (b) His attributes are alike incomprehensible and so they too are of no help. The only thing that can, among ordinary people, form basis of love is His dealings with His creatures, which we express *in our terms* as the moral attributes of God. Here too there are difficulties, of knowledge and appreciation. As to knowledge it is clear that Nature cannot express this so-called 'character' of God fully, not at least to our imperfect intelligence. It is these holy souls that serve as true expressions of the Will of God in creation, His design, purpose, ways of dealing with mankind. (They are not merely created to serve as visible instances of His Love, Justice or Mercy, but it is through them, by means of them, that His Will is exercised, so that He appears Loving, Just, Forgiving or Taking retribution in His creation. He does nothing but through them. Their love is His Love, their wrath is His Wrath.

See note on 3: 153 below. Anyone wishing to see God in action has only to see them and study their character). But apart from knowledge the greatest difficulty is in thorough appreciation, as our appreciations can only be based on our tastes and interests. Many can love God by devoting their attention only to His Infinite Love and Overflowing Mercy, leading to assurance of pardon—*neglecting* the other equally important features of His so-called 'character'. And this is exactly what the vast majority of men do. If they reflect on their own hearts they would find themselves very glad to be appointed ministers of His Mercy, on some work of charity, but would shrink from being instruments of His Wrath and Retribution. However laudable this may appear to themselves, it is really worth nothing. It means they might come to hate God when they are face to face with the other side of His 'character'. The truth is that to love God requires something of a Divine character in the man himself. Here too it is something like doting love for the Prophet that can help to rid us of our weakness by constant impression of the highest ideal taken down into the very roots of our consciousness. What is wanted is a love of God that should abide in spite of *anything* that He may choose to do to ourselves or to others; and this is certainly no ordinary matter. As Our Lord Zainul Abidin says in one of his prayers, "My God, even if Thou tie me up in fetters and remove me from Thy favour in the sight of observers, make the eyes of all creatures witness my disgraces, and order me to go to Hell, and cut me off from the company of the righteous—that will not cut off my hope from Thee and will not take away my love for Thee from my heart." That is the kind of love that is wanted, love that should abide in spite of the worst that one may experience. It is this love that makes the wrath of God really impossible; but this stage cannot be reached unless the dreadful side of God is not also kept constantly in mind and yet the attachment not allowed to suffer. Anybody can see now that the way to it is not to dote on an idealised character serving to endear certain particular qualities in life, as done by Christians, but to try to love an all-comprehensive character as that of our Blessed Prophet who manifested both the sterner and the softer qualities of God's 'character' to perfection. I repeat, nothing but an intense love of our Holy Prophet can elevate man sufficiently to be able to love God truly.

There is thus more than a superficial meaning in this holy verse. It does not mean simply that if ye love God try also to be fit for His love by improving your virtues, following the Prophet whom God has sent to you. If you love God it is impossible that God should not love you. Love is a spiritual union and can never be one-sided. This is a simple

natural truth. The trouble is that man cannot love God truly, in the full sense of the word. The only way to do it is to love the Holy Prophet. It is both its means and its test. "Follow me" says the verse. This is infinitely more than mere obedience for which the word '*atiu*' is used in the next verse. It is *Iti'ibaa*, the following of the heart, the going after of the soul that is meant here, without which obedience is lifeless. Obedience follows *inevitably* if there is real love—a lover cannot possibly do anything that, he knows, would injure the feelings of his beloved. Anything that he *can* do amiss is either an error of judgement, or the result of a seizing of passion in which the thought of the beloved does not occur at all. Thus it is clear that with increasing degrees of love sins become increasingly impossible. This, even if the attachment does not produce an intense love and desire for virtues themselves and an intense hatred of sin by itself—which it must do psychologically if the love is perfect, to say nothing of the spiritual effect due to spiritual union.

"God will love you". Needless to say God's love is only an expression of His Will which He expresses through His holy agencies, the prophets and the Imams and the whole spiritual world with them. Their love is His Love and their hatred is His Hatred. He Himself is far above any affections implying change and human limitations. I mention this simply because the Christians insist that He is *really* subject to all these affections, particularly *sorrow* for the sins of mankind, and say that the Muslim God cannot be loved because He has not what is highest in us. Is it not sufficient that He is the Creator of what they regard as highest in their God, and it is by His will that His holy creatures (who are expressions of His Will) exercise it in their dealings with us.

'And He will forgive you your sins'. This is obvious from what we have said above that with true love the only sins that are possible are either those due to errors of judgement, or those slippings which might occur in a fit of passion before the thought of the displeasure of the beloved comes to the mind. But there is a higher reason for this. When spiritual union of some sort is effected, the relation of the believers to the prophet becomes that of the body to the head. Though sins incapacitate the individuals from seeking forgiveness with the intensity of the feeling that is required, their sins, which thus in a way affect the prophet and oblige him to pray for forgiveness, become thus sure to be forgiven, for not only the prayer proceeds from him who is sinless himself but it has all the earnestness which the whole world could not command together.

In short all we require is to follow the Prophet—truly in the full spiritual sense of the word—and all the rest follows of itself.

Verse 31. Mark that a spirit of reluctance to obey the Prophet in anything is something of infidelity. The verse is addressed to the Musalmans.

Verse 32. In the reading of Ibn Masud, as we learn from Sunni traditions (see Durre Mansur *in loco*) and according to the Imams among the Shias (see Qummi's commentary *in loco*) the verse originally had the words *wa ala Mohammadin* after the words *wa ala Imrara*, which words were somehow omitted in the current Othmanite recension. (See Introduction Vol. I). The full verse would then translate as follows.

'Surely God chose Adam and Noah, and the sons (*al*) of Abraham and the sons (*al*) of Imran and the sons (*al*) of Mohammad above all the worlds.'

In this verse two prophets are named alone and the others with their posterity. To understand this would be easy if we consider the point of selection. In every case that prophet is selected who has started a new order of things. Adam started the human race on earth, the race that came after or exterminated the previous man-like races of which we read in some traditions. (Behar, Anisul Khatir &c. The traditions are commented upon in my Science and Islamic Tradition). Noah was the second Adam whose posterity populated the world or the greater portion of it after the race had been completely destroyed by the Flood. Abraham began a continuous generation of specially religious prophets whose teachings were marked by special religious tenets and practices. The prophets before him appear to be more concerned with culture and ethics than any special religious creed. Anyway there was no such regular succession of prophets before his time. Hence instead of mentioning him alone as in the case of Adam and Noah his *al*, sons, posterity, are mentioned, he himself being of course included. Both of his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, became prophets: being destined to be the ancestors of all great prophets to the end of the world.

The name Imran in *ala Imran* has given rise to much discussion. Imran is the name of three persons who agree in not being prophets themselves, (though they were no doubt holy men) yet being ancestors of a number of prophets they started so to speak the gift of prophecy in their families after it had vanished for a long time past. These three Imrans are:—(1) father of Our Lords Moses and Aaron (2) grandfather (maternal) of Our Lord Jesus (3) father of Our Lord Ali—(Abu Talib). The gift of prophecy had long died out among the Israelites in bondage in Egypt. So Moses and Aaron really revived the gift of prophecy in

their age. Their father Imran, though no prophet himself, probably started the religious revival in the family that resulted in the prophetic gift to his sons, for prophetic gift always comes of seeking and effort and is not capriciously bestowed on any one. Similar was the case about the age of the second Imran, the grandfather of Our Lord Jesus. Prophecy had been closed up about five hundred years before Our Lord. Even the possibility of a prophet to arise was despaired of, so much so that any one wishing to give a sort of new religious teaching was obliged to write his books under the name of some old recognised prophet as Moses, Enoch, &c. thus giving rise to what is called the Pseudepigraphia of the Old Testament. Thus after a long interregnum the gift of prophecy was revived again in a family having the same name for its chief elder. Though not a prophet himself he was a pious holy man; and it may be that as in the case of the first Imran he started a religious revival that led to the prophetic gift coming to Our Lord Zachariah and John the Baptist and finally to Our Lord Jesus. This family was also distinguished by the appearance of the Blessed Virgin who though a woman was as much inspired as any of the prophets.

Exactly similar was the case of Imran (Abu Talib) the uncle of the Holy Prophet and the father of Our Lord Ali. Like the other two Imrans he was not a prophet, but true Abranite faith had survived in the family from the earliest times* and, as to Abu Talib himself, he may be believed to have been gifted with something of prophetic insight as would appear from his verses which he composed at the marriage of the Prophet with Khudaija (see Kafi) from which it would appear that he believed him to be a prophet, at least had some idea of it, years before he announced his Divine Apostleship. Indeed, but for this he could not have stood by the Prophet in the days of persecution as he did. He did not scruple to sacrifice the lives of his own sons to save the life of the Holy Prophet. Fearing perfidious night attacks on the part of the infidels he would every now and then change the bed of the Prophet, making one or other of his own sons to sleep in his bed. Such an intensity of love cannot come out of mere earthly affection, it can only come from the divine spark of faith. Anyway it was not a little the spiritual training he

* Ibnul Nadim writes in his Fehrist that a document written by Hashim in his own hand-writing was found in which he says he gives the loan of some thousand Dinars (exact amount I forget) to such a one on the witness of God and the two angels. Even of the stoutest believers few would at the present day be prepared to lend a sum of money on such

gave to them that made his nephew and sons what they were. So the religious revival we have spoken of in the case of the first two Imrans is at least as certain in his case as in theirs. In short, in him began the starting of the gift of prophecy in the line of Ishmael after an interregnum of about two thousand years. And it gave birth not only to the Last Great Prophet, but also to the continuous line of the Holy Imams which is to continue to the last day. All were his own sons and grandsons.

It was probably owing to this coincidence of three men, bearing the same name, starting religious revivals resulting in the rise of the world's greatest prophets and also a succession of prophets in the same family, that only one Imran is mentioned to serve for them all. The Holy Prophet, being the greatest of the prophets, of course deserves a separate mention, whether his sons (*al*) are included in *Ale Imran* or not.

The Sunnis, of course, do not recognise the third Imran, the uncle of the Holy Prophet, and are divided as to which of the other two Imrans is meant here. Imran the father of Moses and Aaron is the more well-known of the two, and Moses was the prototype of the Holy Prophet, but the beginning of the story of the birth of Mary in the next verse leads to the presumption that it was her father that is meant here. It is for them to settle this among themselves. The Ahmadi commentator quite assumes it is the father of Moses, and for the Imran in the next verse he assumes it was the name not of a man but of the race (!). Whichever opinion is followed the Holy Prophet is excluded from this verse, for the mention of *ale Imran* after *ale Ibrahim* shows that the descendants of Abraham meant here were those only who were before the time of the one or the other of Imrans spoken of in this verse.

NOTE.—The word *al*, which can best be translated sons, is rather of a peculiar connotation. The word originally means sons or progeny, but its use in religious language is limited to the spiritual quality which makes the association with the great ancestor immediate. It also does not exclude the idea of family, the immediate, very close relations being also included if spiritual qualities make them deserve the inclusion. Thus Our Lords Zachariah and John the Baptist were of the *al* of Imran; and so the heading of the Surah '*Ale Imran*' is generally translated 'The family of Imran.' So in praying 'O, Lord, Bless Mohammed and his sons,' we include Our Lord Ali, though he was a cousin to the Prophet. The *al* is thus, in its religious sense equivalent to *Ahle Bait*, which in a loose sense may include anybody, but is really used only for the purest,

holiest members of the family, and excludes all who do not deserve close association with the Blessed Prophet.

NOTE.—Neither the few very unreliable records, called the Gospels and the Apocrypha, nor the writings of the early Christian fathers, fragments of which have come to the Western scholars, give any information about the genealogy of the Blessed Virgin. The Christians are content to conjecture; and some say that of the two conflicting and demonstrably fictitious genealogies of Our Lord in Matthew and Luke one may be that of Joseph and the other that of Mary. The Muslim commentators give a genealogy of Mary which was possibly taken from Arabian Christians. Anyway the Quranic statement of Our Lady being the daughter of a man named Imran goes unchallenged.

The Ahmadi commentator takes the words *Imraatu Imran* in verse 34 as meaning 'a woman of the family of Imran' on the analogy of the Hebrew usage making Kedar stand for the Ishmaelites and Israel for the Israelites. He does not show that this is also the Arab usage, or is even sanctioned by the idiom of Arabic Language.

The idea of some Christian writers who suppose that possibly the Prophet confused Mary, the mother of Jesus, with Miriam, the sister of Aaron, is curious in the extreme. Rodwell sees the difficulty of this, but lends himself to the popular prejudice. His note is this, "Mohammed supposed Imran or Amran to be father of the Virgin Mary (Sura 109: 12)—Mary and Elizabeth to sisters; who with Jesus, John, and Zacharias, make up the family of Imran. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Mohammed is guilty of the anachronism of confounding Miriam with the Virgin Mary. On the other hand is the difficulty of conceiving that as the sequence of time and fact is observed with tolerable accuracy in regard to the main features of Jewish and Christian history he should have fallen into so serious an error, or have so inadvertently adopted, as Muir supposes, the phraseology of his Jewish informants (among whom the only well-known Mary (Miriam) was the daughter of Imran and the sister of Moses) as to have overlooked the discrepancy in their respective dates. But it is possible that Mohammed believed, as some Muslim writers assert, that Miriam's soul and body were miraculously preserved till the time of Jesus in order to become Mary his mother. Certainly the Talmudists fabled that the Angel of Death and the worm of corruption had no power over Miriam. (Comp Babha Bathra 17 Jos. Ant. N, 4, 6)." The appearance of anachronism we have explained sufficiently. As to what Rodwell imputes to Muslim writers, that the mother of Jesus was really the sister of Moses, I have tried for years

but have not been able to find the slightest trace of it in any commentary or book of traditions, and can only suppose it to be a creation of the reverend author's imagination. Though I should not have been surprised if there were any such thing found—the popular commentaries are full of things not less foolish and absurd, derived from Jewish legends or their own imagination.

Verse 33. "And God is Hearing, Knowing." Apparently this verse-ending has no particular connection with the first part, and owing to such not obviously connected endings Muir and other critics say that these are indiscriminately added simply to mould verses into rhyme. But it is hardly too much to say that it requires some thought to understand the word of God. The one prophet is not the offspring of the other merely, always at least, in the sense that we are all offsprings of our great-grandfathers. Among the prophets one is born as a result of the prayer of another. Thus Our Holy Prophet said 'I am the prayer of my father Abraham' (see 2 : 129). John the Baptist was born as the result of the prayer of his father Zechariah when he had no hope of a son (see verse 87 below, also 19 : 23). They are spiritual sons, consciously conceived and prayed for by their ancestors. This makes the fitness of the verse-ending here quite obvious. It is the same in every place, there is always some very deep meaning in these verse endings. See note on the ending of verse 207 of the second Surah in Vol. I.

Verse 34. The devotee of the Temple. These devoties were expected to remain recluses, cut off from worldly life, and so they put on the habit of celibacy. It was possibly because of the wishes of his grandmother that Our Lord took, as much as possible, the ascetic mode of life and did not marry. Otherwise he had great respect for married life (see Burkitt, Lectures on the Syrian Church).

Verse 35. A woman is not the same as a man. That is the daughter could not become a priest.

Mark the place of the parentheses. And God knew best &c. In any other place such parenthesis would make very awkward reading. But it is just where it would be, said in a different tone, when revelation comes in response to thoughts passing in the mind of the Prophet. As the Holy Lady's disappointment is recounted there is some thought, as of surprise, coming along the mind of the Prophet, and the words in parenthesis are revealed to dispel them. God had granted her wish in a sense infinitely higher than she had conceived. An unlettered man of Arabia

could not have thought of using this art to give a stamp of reality to his pretended revelations.

Verse 36. To do away with Our Blessed Lady's being provided *miraculously* with food from on high the Ahmadi Commentator adds a long note, the sum and substance of which is this: "She being attached to the Temple, the worshippers would naturally bring gifts to her, and as it was through Divine grace that she received these gifts, she said it was Allah who gave her these things. At least one commentator holds the same opinion." Was then Zacharias a fool to be surprised at so simple a thing? Is it suited to the dignity of a blessed lady to receive gifts from worshippers? Would it be a commendable thing even for the merest of men and women? And after all, what was the importance of this to be recounted in the Revelation? These things can never occur to these wise men so long as a miracle can be done away it. And it is old story that the story being current as a miracle (see Evan. de Nat 7, Protev. Jab, quoted by Rodwell) it is wholly unjustifiable to recount it in a way that would continue the wrong impression. It was essential to correct it distinctly, not leave it for the Ahmadi Commentator to do it in a roundabout way.

How the Prophet understood the thing appears from the following which is related in almost every Sunni commentary even, to say nothing of the Shias. The Prophet with his family being once starving, his daughter the Blessed Lady Fatima somehow procured some little food and brought it in a tray to present it to her father. The covering being removed there it was found full of all sorts of viands. The Prophet asking her whence she got it all, she replied in the words of this verse. 'It is from God. He provideth sustenance to whom He will without measure.' On this the Prophet gave thanks to God saying, 'Praised be the Lord that made thee similar to Mary.' All the family partook of the food and yet it remained as it was, then it was distributed among the neighbours.

7. On the occasion of, or on hearing of a miracle having a benevolent import all people are led to pray for themselves.

Verse 38. 'Testifier of the Word from God.' The great mission of Our Lord John the Baptist was to prepare the people for the reception of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to announce his advent in the near future and to testify to him. See Matthew Chap. 3, John Chap. 1. He said, 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.....He who is coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear' (20—27). Our

Lord repeatedly used the testimony of John in his favour as an argument to confute the Jews.

'*The Word from God*' Of all the prophets it is only Our Lord Jesus Christ who is designated as the Word from God or Spirit proceeding from Him. Thus in 4: 171. 'O ye People of the Book, do not exceed the limits in your religion and say not of God except what is true. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary is only a Prophet of God and His Word that He sent unto Mary and the Spirit (coming) from Him.' There can be but one reason for this, his Immaculate virgin birth which distinguishes him from all other prophets. He had no earthly father, what the earthly father would have done for his procreation in the womb of Mary, that was effected by way of a miracle, *i. e.* by the command of God and by the Almighty power of God. Thus it may be figuratively said that he was the Word *i. e.* command from God or spirit *i. e.* force issuing from Him that appeared as a child in the womb of Mary. Even if any other interpretation of the words were possible it would have been unjustifiable to use these words of Our Lord and single him out for these epithets, as the words were taken in that sense or very nearly the same sense in the Christian Theology and it would be perpetuation of error to use these terms if the sense that common usage had stuck to them were wholly wrong. At least it was necessary to make a full clear explanation. The Ahmadi Commentator writes a pageful of note on this word trying to interpret it as prophecy, but the above does not once occur to his mind. We need not discuss it. One curious thing that he says is that the expression is not used of Christ at all. "The promise given to Zacharias was a word from Allah and John was the verifier of that word, because his birth brought about the fulfilment of the prophecy." Then Yezid was also a verifier of a word from God, as he and his misdeeds had been repeatedly foretold by the Prophet—a poor compliment to the Holy Prophet John.

'*Hasur*.' The word is used of one who in his intensity of devotion shows no attraction for women and leads a celibate life. The thing is not a virtue absolutely, that is, it does not fall in with Kant's definition of good, but procreation is only one of the many duties of man and there may be circumstances in which it may have to give way before others of imminent importance. Our Lord's age was one of extreme profligacy, and it was perhaps considered fit to counteract the growing tendency of the age by an example to the contrary in the extreme. So too, many of the moral teachings of Our Lord Jesus, for which he is admired so much in the empty words of his missionaries, are simply extremely impracticable

precepts. If faithfully reported the purpose can only have been to draw men away from their gross sensual life as forcibly as possible, knowing that the swing will have to redound and will only stop when the golden mean is reached. In short all prophets would have been *Haasur* if circumstances called for it. It is not a thing absolutely good or bad itself.

The extravagances of Sunni commentators sometimes make one recoil with disgust. Some divines of note are not content to say that Our Lord was unfit for marital relations; they also know in what that unfitness consisted. (See *Mawahib*). When these men do not scruple to publish such indecent tales about prophets who had done nothing to them, what would they not invent about the Prophet against whom they may have many earthly causes of complaint?

Versé 40. This is a correction of the Biblical account which 'makes Zacharias mute during the whole period, from the time of the announcement of the birth of a son to its actual delivery, and that only for a question which, if it implied unbelief at all, was much milder than that of Mary, compare Luke 1: 20 and 1, 34.' He had simply asked for a sign and was told he would suddenly become dumb for three days. What led him to ask for a sign was not any incredulity on his part surely, but it appears that in his surprise at the announcement he was curious to know if there would be something akin to rejuvenation in himself or his wife, but was told it would be nothing of the kind, the only 'sign' for it would be something wholly unconnected with it, his own dumbness for three days only. That may, if you please, be taken as a slight rebuke for his question, but it was really nothing.

Notice that the sign is only his inability to speak with men for three days. It has nothing whatever to do with the command to remember God and glorify Him morning and evening. And yet this urged by the Ahmadi Commentator as proof that he was never dumb. In his translation he renders the passage thus "Your sign is that you *should* not speak to men for three days except by signs and remember your Lord much and glorify Him in the evening and the morning." The 'should' is wholly wrong. The tense for speak is Aorist used for present and future, and the words remember and glorify are in the imperative mood. Such are the tactics of our friend, meant simply to avoid the merest miracle.

SECTION 5.

Mary is chosen Announcement of the birth of a son to her. Jesus gives signs of his supernatural powers to men. His disciples. Plan against his life and its frustration.

41. And when the Angels said : O Mary, surely God hath chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of all the worlds.

42. O Mary ! Keep to prayer to thy Lord and prostrate thyself (before Him) and bow down with those who bow.

43. This is the announcement relating to the unseen which We reveal to thee, for thou wast not with them when they cast lots with reeds which of them should look after Mary ; nor wast thou with them when they disputed together.

44. When the angels said, O Mary, verily God sendeth to thee the glad tidings of a Word from Him whose name shall be the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary ; illustrious in this world and in the next, and one of those who are nearest to God ;

45. And he shall speak to men (alike when) in the cradle and when grown up ; and (he shall be) one of just."

46. She said, How, O my Lord, shall I have a son, when man hath not touched me ? He said, In this wise doth God create whatsoever He will ; When He decreeth a thing, He only saith to it, Be and it is.

47. And He will teach him the Book and the Wisdom, and the Torah and the Evangel.

48. An apostle to the children of Israel. That now have I come to you with a sign from your Lord : Out of clay will I make for you like the figure of a bird : and I will

breathe into it, and it shall become a bird by God's permission. And I will heal the blind, and the leper, and will quicken the dead by God's permission; and I will tell you what ye eat, and what ye store up in your houses! Truly in this will be a sign for you, if ye be believers.

49. And (I come) attesting that which is before me of the Torah; and to allow you part of that which had been forbidden you. And I come to you with a sign from your Lord: Fear God, then, and obey me;

50. Of a truth God is my Lord, and your Lord: Therefore worship Him. This is a right way.

51. But when Jesus perceived unbelief on their part, He said, Who are to be my helpers in the cause of God? The Apostles (*Hawariyyun*) said. We will be God's helpers! We believe in God, and bear Thou witness that we are submitting to Him (Muslims).

52. Our Lord! we believe in what Thou hast sent down, and we follow the Apostle; write us up, then, with those who bear witness to him.

53. And (the Jews) plotted, and God plotted and God is the best of plotters.

Verse 41. Notice the greatness of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and yet as in the case of Israelite prophets (See 2: 47) this applies only to her age. Fatima, the daughter of the Holy Prophet, is according to our traditions (Sunni traditions not excluded) greater than her.

Verse 42. Prayer in some form and that in a congregation, was a feature of all true religions.

Verse 43. The point in this verse and other similar verses should be carefully considered. See note on 2: 133. It is not that all past history of the prophets is "unseen," something unknown and unknowable, but that it could come to the Prophet's knowledge only by sources so untrustworthy as the Bible, Apocrypha and the like, which those even who regard them as sacred and inspired do not receive with any great confidence, in

particulars at least—what certainty was there that any particular fact is correct as is recorded? The Revelation was needed to give assurance about these things which would otherwise be no better than old wives' tales. It was also required to correct when there were inaccurate statements, and to supply information where there was none in the meagre sources that were available. It is a gross misunderstanding of these passages to suppose that they urge the narration of these stories of old times, as a proof of the Inspiration of the Quran. The passage does not say that, but for this revelation, the Prophet could not have heard anything of the casting of lots about Mary's guardianship. It only says that but for the revelation the Prophet could not feel as if he had been by the side of the men who cast the lots. No unreliable evidence can give such *knowledge*, only trustworthy evidence can give such *knowledge*; thus I can say that I know that the English conquered at the battle of Plassy in 1757. I cannot say the same thing of the miracles attributed to the Catholic saints. This is the difference; anybody can see its importance. The passage is meant only for the Prophet who received the Revelation directly, or for believers who accept that Revelation as Divine.

The story of the casting of lots can be found in Protovangelion of Jacob, chapters 7, 8 & 9, from which Tisdell has quoted at length in his Yanabei. Though a work somewhat later than the Gospels it certainly represents traditions current in the early Church.

Verse 44. 'Word from God'. See note on verse 38 above. No more need be said about it though the Ahmadi Commentator devotes another pageful of note to make it mean prophecy.

Verse 45. As to this the Ahmadi Commentator says, very truly indeed: 'As to speaking in the cradle and when of old age, neither of them can be considered a miracle. Every healthy child which is not dumb begins to talk when in the cradle, and *speaking when of old age* also shows that this speaking is the ordinary experience of every human being who is healthy and lives to an old age. (!) Very true certainly, but then why is this mentioned at all? The speaking to men is surely much more than the prattling of a child. It is that which is so distinctly narrated in Sura XIX (Mary, verses 29 to 33). As to old age it is a matter of history that Our Lord never reached a ripe old age. Even if we regard his birth to have taken place a number of years before the Christian Era we cannot get more than 47 years, the greatest age ascribed to him in a Christian tradition. The unsophisticated commentators say this will be at the time of his second advent; and we, antiquated men, agree with them.

Verse 46. On this very clear verse the Ahmadi Commentator's note is this " But the words do not show that she would conceive out of the ordinary course of nature, for there is no doubt that Mary had other children which no one supposes to have been conceived out of the ordinary course of nature." Granting that Mary had other sons, which is very doubtful, their birth was not announced by angels, nor immediately on the announcement in her state of virginity, as described in detail in 19 : 17-22 which also the Ahmadi Commentator tries his best to pervert. Who but one interested in perversion of truth will fail to see something unusual in the reply of the angels in the verse before us ?

Verse 48. The miracle of turning toy birds to real ones is given in detail in the Gospel of St. James known as Protevangelion of Christ, and also in the Gospel of Infancy where, it is considered, the account is based on the former book. The general reader can get full citation in the Yanabiul Islam. Briefly, it is stated that the Jews being shocked at seeing Our Lord (when a boy) playing with toy birds on a sabbath day complained to Joseph, who coming to rebuke him for it, Our Lord let them loose telling them to fly away, and off they flew—greatly to the surprise of all who saw and heard of it. This represents traditions current about the end of the first or beginning of the second century, and may possibly be based on written sources like the account of Our Lord's speaking in the cradle, as shown in the Introduction. The mere fact that no such miracle is recorded in the four received Gospels is sufficient for our "Orthodox" Protestant Christians to reject them, but anybody can see it can prove nothing, as these brief sketches (three based on one original) confine themselves almost exclusively to his career as apostle and say nothing of his early life, a deficiency which Farrar and other writers use all their literary art to guile away their readers from feeling intensely. Whatever their admirers might say, these received Gospels are of the meagrest value for information, and none but those whose interest it is to have as little as possible to believe and care for religiously would confine themselves to these as the present day Christians try stiffly to do. It is in this respect that these so-called "Apocryphal Gospels" are of infinite value, and we have seen in the Introduction that, for all we can judge, they appear to be of much greater intrinsic historical worth.

Seeing the utter emptiness of this ground, for rejecting the story Mr. Tisdell tries to supplement it with another which, if anything, only serves to strengthen it. It is this that in John, Chap 2, relating the miracle of turning water into wine, it is said, ' This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples

believed on him' (John 2: 11). Which, the wiseacres say, shows this was the first miracle and no other was shown before it. But accepting this story (which we fear we cannot) it only proves that other miracles were shown before this time at least privately. For, the story is that wine having run short in the marriage and there being great consternation for it Our Blessed Lady Mary appealed to him for help (verse 4) on which he rebuked her saying 'Mine hour is not yet come' (verse 5). Still she said to the servants to see what he bids and do it (Verse 5), and then Our Lord, relenting, directed them to fill the waterpots with water and then turned it all into wine. No one who reads this account can for a moment doubt that Our Blessed Lady expected that he would do something by way of miracle, and this could not be unless she knew that he used to work wonders before. The most that word 'beginning of miracles' can show is that this was the first miracle shown in 'Cana of Galilee'—not that no other miracle was shown by him previously anywhere in the world.

We have said we fear we cannot accept story at all. Our reasons are (1) It is unimaginable to us that a great Prophet would have thought it good to supply such a nasty demoralizing article as wine. The use of spirituous liquor may not have been forbidden in the Law those days, but bad it was all the same, and to provide it by a miracle is nothing short of perpetuating drinking as a highly commendable practice. No wonder missionaries try in vain for temperance when drinking is so obviously commended in their religion. (2) It is unimaginable to us that a great Prophet could have rebuked his mother, and that too in the language that is reported "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." It is Christians alone who can swallow such strange unbecoming tales of their God.

It is right to say that while we attach much greater value to the so-called Apocryphal Gospels than to the received ones we do not pin our faith to them. Equally with the received Gospels we regard them as representing traditions, and there may be any mixture of truth and fable in them. It is on the authority of the Quran and *our* traditions from the Prophet and the Imams that we believe in this and other miracles of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The story, as we find in some traditions, about the turning of clay birds into real ones is somewhat different from that in the Protevangelion, but it is useless to write it, as all these things are unverifiable.

No note is required about the other miracles. They are famous enough and are found in all Gospels, received or apocryphal. Anybody can see that, but for some such miraculous powers of the highest order, a man having such a suspicious birth could never have been listened

to even in any section of people much less pass for a great prophet and ultimately come to be believed as God. One great thing was that the miraculous powers were not, all of them, confined to himself, at least the powers to heal the sick in his name were granted to his apostles and even his ministers and they continued to be exercised by them for centuries—so long as the Christian faith continued to any extent in its purity. It was this that led to the continuous spread of Christianity in the most unfavourable conditions, even under the most dreadful persecutions.

One particular thing to note is that in speaking of his miracles in the verse there is the addition "With the permission of God" to two miracles only—the turning of clay birds to real ones and the raising of the dead—the others, healing the blind and the leprous and telling their hidden secrets, have no such addition to them, implying that he (and others too) could do them by exercise of his great spiritualistic powers. All wonderful things are not essentially miraculous in the religious sense of being done with special Divine power granted with the leave of God. The progress of science and spiritualistic knowledge has thoroughly justified the distinction. The well-authenticated cases of healing performed by means of suggestion and auto-suggestion—hypnosis, Christian science and the like are not miracles by themselves as infringements of natural laws, but they might become so, as they were in the case of the prophets, being effected sometimes under conditions when faith, the essential condition of their normal success was absent. So though the word "With the permission of God" is not attached to these miracles it is not wholly cut off from them and can be construed with them if the reader likes. Generally it may be said that these second-class miracles are not, by themselves and independently of any other consideration, evidence of miraculous powers. But they may be truly miracles and may be proved to be such when all other considerations are analysed and examined.

The horror of the miraculous leads the Ahmadi Commentator to interpret all as merely poetic parable for infusing new life, spiritual healing &c. He labours over it in notes stretching over three pages which can raise no more than a smile of contempt. One thing is all he proves—that however plain and obvious a passage may be, men like him may distort and misinterpret it. He would not allow Our Lord even the power to tell what they ate or stored in their houses. This is explained as follows: "Jesus' preaching laid special stress upon not having any care "for the morrow" and his advice to rich men when they came to him was to sell all that they had. He would have them lay up their treasures in heaven. It is to this aspect of his teaching that the verse

refers, the plain meaning of the words being that he told them of what they had lawfully earned, and what they should store in their houses (meaning that they should not amass riches, but should spend them in Allah's way, and thus lay up for themselves treasures in heaven) " (!!!) It is for this interpretation that he translates the words in the passage thus : "And I inform you of what you should eat and what you should store in your houses." Surely not many of his readers would care to pry into every word of his translation and compare it with the text. The little word 'should' can easily pass unnoticed.

Verse 51. Ahassa, perceived as with a sense, that is there remained not a possibility of doubt about it. 'On their part'. On the part of the Jews to whom he was sent. The Knfr is the determination to slay him which would doubtless have brought down terrible punishment on the people. The meaning is that when Our Lord became convinced that however long he might remain preaching among them he could not have any success, he resolved to go to heaven to do his work there, leaving the work on earth to his disciples. What his work there is we cannot say for certain, for we have no express declarations of the Prophet or the Imams on this point. But generally we know that guidance of the people on earth is but an infinitesimal part of the work these great holy souls have to do. They have under control the moral and spiritual government in all creation, even the physical workings of the Universe are subject to their commands. This would no doubt appear too much for some people to believe, but it is in fact so reasonable that though it is an exclusively Shia doctrine one at least of the modern thinkers Mr. Young-husband, who has never heard of it, has come to precisely similar conclusions from purely philosophical considerations. In his work entitled "Life in the Stars" he undertakes to prove that of the countless stars a considerable number are attended with planets, many of which have living beings who may be higher than ourselves. And on one there is a World Leader who represents the collective genius of the whole and controls its activities spiritually. These World Leaders, are ordinary mortals and come and go ; nor are they confined to any single planet and may now be on this planet, now on that. Essentially much of this is speculation as he has not touched spiritualism, but it at least shows the reasonableness of the doctrine taught by the Imams, even if the spiritual standpoint be ignored. Regrettably we have to leave the question here, for we cannot condense the lines of evidence and argument in a brief note. In short, Our Lord in heaven is not doing nothing. He has a great deal of work to do, however little we may know of it.

Our Lord's continued life in heaven is a parallel to Our Lord the Mahdi's continued life on earth. See note on 4:156 &c.. He was the last of the Israelite prophets, as Our Lord the Mahdi is the last of the Imams.

'*Hawariyyun*' a name given specially to the disciples of Our Lord. The commentators usually derive it from *Hawar* meaning whiteness referring apparently to their purity of heart and purification of others. The European critics of Islam insist that it is not an Arabic word proper but is derived from the Ethiopic root *haurya* meaning to go and thus the word is used in the sense of apostles. If so, the reason might be to avoid the word *Rasul* which is appropriated for the prophets. Thus the choice of the word was a particularly happy one as a term for Our Lord's disciples, as it gets two meanings both correct and applicable and helps to avoid a confusion of terms. The case is thus similar to that of *Furqan*. See note on verse 2 above.

Later Arabians seem to have forgotten both meanings of the word and to have understood it indiscriminately in the sense of a close attendant. There we have a tradition put into the mouth of the Prophet making Zobeir a Hawari of the Prophet. This was thus no doubt an invention of the later times.

Who are my assisters towards God (*ilallah*). That is, who are to continue my work after me so that I may be enabled to go to my God.

Verse 53. The plan of the Jews was to excite the suspicions of the Roman Governor against him by making him appear a dangerous schemer against the Roman State. The plan of God was to confound them in their object. Jesus was saved and someone else crucified in his place. Historical reasons for doubting that it was really Our Lord who was crucified are given in note to 4:155. Pilate, who was probably a secret disciple of Our Lord, being greatly averse to Our Lord's execution and passed the order very reluctantly simply on account of fear that the Jews might represent him as lacking in spirit of loyalty to Calsar, it is but natural to suppose that his men, the Roman guards who were escorting him to the place of execution would have done their work carelessly with a feeble heart even if there were no secret instructions from their master. From the accounts in the Gospels we learn that according to some Our Lord himself was made to bear his Cross, according to others it was Simon the Cyrranean. This Simon was believed among the earliest Christians to have been really crucified having previously volunteered to do so at Our Lord's request. It is said in conformity to our traditions that the crucified follower greatly resembled Our Lord and may have

been made to appear more so at the time to the men around who knew him but distantly (See Sale's note). It is easy to conceive how a confusion might have been effected in these circumstances and Simon allowed to have been crucified in the place of Our Lord. The secret was well-known to Our Lord's disciples, as is clear from the fact that they showed not the slightest spirit at the time or ever afterwards against Pilate or the Jews, which it was but natural that they should; it was in the interest of Pilate that knowing the truth they outwardly expressed belief in Our Lord's crucifixion.

An extract from Sale's note *in loco* may be profitable here to give an idea of the strength of the evidence. He says:

"It is supposed by several that this story was an original invention of Mohammed's, but they are certainly mistaken, for several sectaries held the same opinion, long before his time. The Basilidians (Ireneus I. I C 23 &c. Epiphan Haeres 24 num iii) in the very beginning of Christianity, denied that Christ himself suffered, but that Simon the Cyrranean was crucified in his place. The Cerinthians before them, and the Carpocratians next (to name no more of those who affirmed Jesus to have been a mere man) did believe the same thing; that it was not himself, but one of his followers very like him that was crucified. Photius tells us that he read a book entitled "The Journeys of the Apostles," relating the acts of Peter, John, Andrew, Thomas and Paul; and among other things contained therein, this was one, that *Christ was not crucified, but another in his stead, and that therefore he laughed at his crucifiers* (Photius, Bible cod 114, col 291) or those who thought they had crucified him (Toland's Nazarenus P 17 &c)."

SECTION 6.

Divine promise of Jesus' triumph over his enemies. His special creation was only like that of Adam. Christians called to pray with the Prophet for the curse of God to overtake whichever of the two insisted on false doctrine.

54. When God said: O Jesus I will take hold of thee (*maraffika*) and lift thee up to my presence (*Rafeoka ilayya*) and clear thee off from those that believe not, and set those that follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day.

of resurrection: then to Me shall be your return and I will decide between you as to that in which ye were wont to differ.

55. And as to those who believe not, I will chastise them with a terrible chastisement in this world and in the next; and none shall they have to help them.

56. But as to those who believe, and do the things that are right, He will pay them their recompense in full, and God loveth not the unjust.

57. This, We rehearse that unto thee (as) some of the signs and wise admonition.

58. Verily the case of Jesus with God is as the case of Adam. He created him out of dust: He then said to him, Be and he is.

59. A truth from thy Lord! Be not thou, therefore, of those who doubt.

60. Wherefore who disputeth with thee about him after that Knowledge hath come to thee, Say: Come, let us summon our sons and your sons, our wives and your wives, and our selves and your selves. Then let us invoke and lay the curse of God on those that lie!

61. Verily this is the recital of the very truth and there is no god but God; and verily God is the Mighty, the Wise.

62. But if they turn away, then verily God knoweth the mischief makers.

Verse 54. mutawaffika "I will take hold of thee" or "I will cause thee to die." The former is the primary, original, sense of the word, and the word is everywhere used in the Quran in that sense. Thus, "He it is who takes your souls (*yatawaffakum*) at night" (6: 60)., "God is He who takes up (*yatawaffa*) souls (of men) when they die, and those that do

not die in their sleep." (39:43). The angels seize and strike infidels (8:52). The word came to be used of death by a sort of euphemism, and if a traditional interpretation of the word from Ibne Abbas given by Bokharee is to be trusted it may be that the euphemism may have been current in the Prophet's time. He is said to have explained *mutawaffika* by *munituka* i. e. cause thee to die. So this secondary meaning may be admissible as possible though only in a secondary way. If used in that sense it can only have been intended to emphasise the fact that Our Lord Jesus was not *killed* or *put to death* on the Cross, as the Christians believe, but that he was destined to die a natural death—the expression being never used of a man who is killed or murdered. According to tradition unanimously held among all sects of Musalmans the holy prophet was miraculously saved from going to the Cross, was raised aloft to heaven, is still alive there, will come down near the end of the world in the days of Our Lord the Mahdi of Islam, will work with him for the regeneration of mankind and then die a natural death.

The Qadiani sect lay great stress on this word here thinking it lends support to their view that Our Lordt though really crucified as the Christians assert did not die on the Cross but was taken down before life was extinct so that he died a natural death afterwards. It is pretended that he died and was buried somewhere in Kashmir; to set up which theory it is insisted that a grave commonly known as the grave of a certain Josaphet Nabi is no other than the grave of Our Lord Jesus. To support their allegation that Our Lord was brought down alive from the Cross they sedulously trumpet that shameless imposture, "Crucifixion by an Eyewitness" published anonymously by an American Freemasonry Society. This little book pretends to be a letter written seven years after crucifixion by a friend of Our Lord to one of his brother masons giving an account of the real facts which have been clothed with all sorts of miracles in popular imagination. He says Our Lord was a brother mason in one of the higher orders, he was crucified but the masons secretly contrived to have him got down before life was extinct and had him treated and healed up. That is the whole truth, the letter says, but the people who have no written accounts know only traditions which the writer says are like the winds carrying dust as they proceed. Well, this letter the writer pretends to write only seven years after the Crucifixion and yet in it we read not only that no writer has yet written any account of Our Lord's life but he precisely names, Matthew, John, Mark and Luke as having not written anything. I can only regard this as providence of God to expose impostures when they mean to destroy religion.

'And raise thee to Myself' (*Rafuka illayya*). These words the Ahmadi Commentator translates as "and exalt you (thee) in My presence;" and in the note says, 'Raf' signifies *raising or elevating* and also *exalting or making honorable* (Raghib, Tajul Arus, Lane's Lexicon). But when the *raf* of a man to Allah is spoken of in the Holy Quran, or in the religious literature of Islam, it is without a single exception in the latter sense, for raising a man in his body to Himself implies that the Divine Being is limited to a place." *Raf'a* undoubtedly is used frequently in the metaphorical sense of exaltation, but *raf' ila* 'raising to' is quite a different thing, and it can be confidently stated that there is not a single place "in the Holy Quran or in the religious literature of Islam" where the expression is used in any other sense except that of taking the man bodily or spiritually to place associated with the name of God, as Kaaba on earth is said to be the House of God. Certainly no place as place is nearer to God than another but spiritually one place may be near to Him and the other remote. Surely the God-fearing will be amid gardens and rivers, on the seat of truth, with (*Indu*) the Powerful Sovereign." So Hell and its inmates are remote from His presence. Also as Allama Bursi has shown in his *Mashariqul Anwar* when God speaks of Himself in language having anthropomorphical implications, He does not mean Himself as the Absolute Infinite, All-pervading, Incomprehensible Power behind things, but of Himself as manifested in His actions through His Holy agencies in the spiritual world. With these He identifies Himself as He identified Himself with the Splendour which appeared and spoke to Moses. These manifestations of God are certainly limited and have spacial relations. The place where Our Lord was taken to was one where these abound, the world of angels and other holy spirits—the world where angelic souls can continue in the bliss of divine contemplation and engage themselves in Divine activities of which we, insects of a moment, cannot have even the barest conception.

Difficult as the conception is for the uneducated, who are naturally materialistic, there is no excuse now for those who know something of the vast amount of evidence that spiritualism is gathering about the survival of personalities after death. After all these must exist somewhere, and if there is a place for these why should there not be a 'heaven' to which Our Lord might have been transported. And it is not philosophy or spiritualism alone which speaks of these higher planes of existence. Mathematics also lends support to these higher conceptions. The eminent German physicist Zoolner shows that four dimensional space (and for that matter spaces of higher dimensions) are probably physical realities and

the higher powers that astound us in the phenomena of spiritualism may be due to higher powers derived from the higher geometrical relations in these higher spaces.

Verse 58. See note on the first verse of this Surah. The sole argument the Christians of Najran advanced to the Prophet for the divinity of Our Lord Jesus was that he had no father. This verse was revealed in reply to them. This might seem too stupid a thing to call for a revelation to reply, but here will be found reply to all contentions Christians make or may ever make about anything unusual about Our Lord, from which they jump by faith to his divinity. The modern form of the argument is that Christ being born without a father had not the taint of original sin which all men inherit from Adam. The answer is, how did Adam get to sin who had neither father nor mother. If it is that it is flesh that sinneth that flesh Jesus too had from his mother. But we may be excused to deal any longer with utter nonsense.

It is strange that in spite of this history the Ahmadi Commentator says, "there is no reference (here) to Jesus being brought into existence without the agency of a male parent."

Verse 59. An instance of *Iyyaka aani wa asmaie ya jarah*. To thee I speak but hear thou the neighbour. (See Introduction)—The people are meant to be warned, not that the Prophet could doubt.

Verse 60. This is the famous Mubahala verse. The deputation of the Christians of Najran (A. H 10) consisted of sixty men headed by Abdul Masih. The Prophet lodged them in the sacred Mosque where they performed their services with perfect freedom. Some objected to their blowing horns but the Prophet bade them desist from any interference. Having thus made them feel quite at home the Prophet entered into controversy with them about their religion and related to them arguments showing that Jesus Christ was not God but a man and a prophet. Having argued the question fully and finding them still insisting in their false belief in the deity of Jesus the Prophet invited them as a last resort to pray earnestly that the curse of God might overtake the party that insisted upon falsehood. They agreed to this and the next morning (24th of Zilhijja) was fixed for this *Mubahala* in the open plain. In the night their faith began to waver and, if the Muslim accounts be accepted, the leaders plainly told them that the Prophet was a true Prophet and if they enter into *Mubahala* with him divine punishment will forthwith seize them. Up till morning they were still divided about the risky task But when in the morning they saw the Prophet coming out alone without

any followers, with only the child Husain in his arms, the elder child Hasan walking by his side holding to his fingers, their mother Fatima walking behind, and her husband Ali behind her, their hearts gave way completely, and their leader exclaimed 'By God I see faces that if they pray to God for mountains to move from their places they will do so.' They said they were decided not to do the *Mubahala* with him and begged to be allowed to continue in their old religion, agreeing to pay a large tribute, Jezia, that was imposed upon them. The day (24th Zilbijja) is observed as a great feast day among the Musalmans, particularly among the Shias who hold special services in honour of the day.

It is amusing to read the Christian biographers of the Prophet trying to make us believe that this action on the part of their co-religionists was not due to any real impression made on their minds, but was prompted by Christian charity or a high sense of this being a strange mode of settling the dispute, though it is admitted that their ecclesiastical history abounds in instances of this kind. There is only one way to deal with such apologies—to leave it to their conscience. If they only consider the penalty they willingly paid to avoid it that would be sufficient to show them the truth.

Among the Sunnis there is a difference of opinion whether it is permissible to resort to *Mubahala* in religious disputes, some thinking that it was special for the Prophet. Among the Shias there is no difference of opinion, though it is agreed that it should not be resorted to until all ways of convincing by argument have failed, and one is sure that the other clings on to falsehood merely owing to obstinacy and hatred of truth. There was one *Mubahala* some years ago at Amroha and the result was published in the local journal 'Al Imam.' It was done by two young men, one Shia the other Sunni who were quarrelling about the Caliphate. Eventually they consented to *Mubahala*. Oil was boiled in a cauldron, and both dipped their hands in it. The hand of the Shia came out unscathed, that of the other was badly injured, taking a long time to heal. In fact *Mubahala* is nothing but prayer, and no believer in the efficacy of prayer can well doubt its validity.

From the Shia point of view the Prophet's *Mubahala* is important, as showing the incomparable superiority of Our Lord Ali, his wife Fatima and his sons, Hasan and Husain over all others in the community. The Prophet on his part obeyed the command in the verse to literal scrupulousness. In the words "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, and our selves and your selves" the

words "Our sons and your sons" come first. So the Holy Prophet took one child in his arms and the other he held by his hand. Next the verse says "Our women and your women"—the Prophet took his daughter behind himself. Last come the words "Our selves and your selves (*anfus*)"—so Our Lord Ali followed behind his wife, Fatima.

With all this scrupulousness to the letter of the verse, consider that the command in all cases was in the plural. Granting that the Prophet had no sons except his grandchildren Hasan and Husain, why was it that having no less than nine wives with him he took not one of them, but took only his daughter Fatima with him? Again as to selves (*anfus*) he could take any number of his followers; but he did not take any one of them contenting himself with Our Lord Ali alone. There is meaning in this surely, and who can fail to see what it is? The Sunnis are painfully alive to it and so after all a shameless tradition has been shamelessly invented that the Prophet took the sons of Abubecker and the sons of Omar and so forth with him (Mawahib), but others having more regard for their reputation have unanimously rejected it as a lie.

The most important word in the verse is *Anfusana wa Anfusakum* 'Our very selves and your very selves'. *Anfus* is plural of *Nafs* meaning soul. As used in the plural the word may be used of friends, comrades, the underlying implication being of unity and equality, unity of thought and feeling, equality of rank &c., so that one can be substituted for the other. It was in this sense that the opposite party were required to bring their men along, they being supposed all the same, as nearly as might be, in religion, culture, morals. In the same loose sense the Prophet could take any number of his Sahabas. They could be called his men (*Anfus*). But he was sticking to the full import of God's word. However holy and pious many of the Sahabas might be, he would not take any one; they were still far removed from being able to be called *his anfus*, *his* souls truly. There was still an immeasurable difference in rank, spiritually, to say nothing of perfect unity in spirit which he was seeking after, to stick to the words in their full sense. His selection of Our Lord Ali alone shows that in him he found a soul which was at least so nearly equal spiritually to his own that it might fitly be called his own soul. How nearly it was the same, appears from his saying 'I and Ali are from the same Light' (*Nur*), or from his giving the power to Our Lord Ali to pronounce divorce for any of his wives after him. It was the threat to carry out this authority that compelled Ayesha to leave the battlefield of Jamal in a decent respectable way. (Rowzatul Ahtab, see also Ibn Abil Hadid, commentary on Nahjul Balaghat).

After this it is clearly unnecessary to comment on the words 'Our women.' As to "Our Sons" Hasan and Husain were so completely regarded as the Prophet's sons that even their own father Our Lord Ali scrupled to treat them like his other sons. Mohammed (called Ibn Hanafiya once complaining to Our Lord that he always used to send him on his wars, but never Hasan and Husain who were much elder than himself he replied, 'Nay, boy, you are my son, they are the Prophet's.'

SECTION 7.

Invitation to accept the Unity of God as the common ground between all religions. Invitation to the faith of Abraham. The followers of the Book reproved.

63. Say : O people of the Book ! come ye to a word common between us and you—That we worship not aught but God, and that we join no other god with Him, and that some of us take not the other for lords, beside God. Then if they turn their backs, say : Bear ye witness that we are Muslims.

64. O people of the Book ! Why dispute about Abraham when the Law and the Evangel were not sent down till after Him ? Do ye not then understand ?

65. Lo ! ye are those who disputed about that respecting which ye had (some) knowledge ; wherefore then dispute ye about that of which ye have no knowledge ? God knows while ye know not. .

66. Abraham was not a Jew, neither was he a Christian ; but pure in faith (*Hanif*), a Muslim, and not of those who join others to God.

67. Verily, of men the nearest of kin (*Aulannas*) to Abraham, are surely those who follow him, and this prophet and they who believe on him. And God is the guardian (*Wali*) of the faithful.

68. Some of the people of the Book would fain mislead you: but they only mislead themselves, but perceive it not.

69. O people of the Book! Why disbelieve the signs of God, while ye yourselves are witnessing them.

70. O people of the Book! Why clothe ye the truth with falsehood, and why do ye hide the truth knowing it (all the time.)

Verse 68. In this verse it is chiefly the Christians who are referred to in connection with their doctrine of Trinity. Since in spite of this peculiar doctrine of theirs they stontly profess themselves to be monotheists, they are invited in a friendly way to a faith that can be common ground between themselves and the Muslims. They are requested just to understand their belief, try to analyse their thoughts, and they will see that their profession of monotheism is mere empty words—their doctrine really amounts to *Shirk*, joining other things with God and making man a god. Both these implications will be denied, but they are requested to see closely, and it is hoped they will understand. If they refuse—as they generally do refuse—to consider the question, being taught the lesson of “mystery” from their childhood, they are requested at least to bear witness that we, Muslims, are pure monotheists. If they deign to think that much—and reflect upon it, for no one has ever thought of disputing it—they will in time come of themselves to see the truth and accept it. This is the psychology of this famous verse calling non-Muslims to bear witness that we are Muslims. It was in these words that the Prophet wrote to the various Christian princes and chiefs inviting them to Islam.

The latest ideas of Christians—Christians trying to philosophise and convince such stiff Rationalists as the Musalmans, Deists as he calls them, may be read in Gairdner’s *God as Triune, Creator, Incarnate Atoner*, published by C. L. S. Madras. Some of the positions taken up in the book are:—

(1). God is One in the sense of being a sort of spiritual organism, in which the whole is in every part and is one with the whole, though having separate individualities and functions.

(2). This inter-relatedness makes the conception of creation easy, as creation is also a relation.

(3). Oreation being activity, God must be essentially active from the beginning (It is inconvenient to say that His *creative* activity is eternal, for it would make the world eternal). So He is eternally active in *loving*, which implies that the object of His love always existed with Him. And who could it be but His own Son, possessed of all His own perfections and equal to Him in every way?

(4) God is affected with all human emotions, love, pity, anger, sorrow. It was to show these moral qualities that He incarnated in Jesus *

Is it necessary to say that if theism means belief in God to whom we are led by Reason in the well-known philosophical arguments, the One, Absolute, Independent, Necessary Existence, to whom alone the Law of sufficient Reason cannot apply owing to His being free from everything of the nature of contingency—then Christians are not theists, whatever else they may be. See further in the Supplement.

Verse 64. The dispute is about the faith of Abraham, the Jews and Christians each claiming that his religious beliefs were the same as theirs. Of all religious beliefs that about God is the most important. The Christian belief, such as is now represented, we have sketched above. That in earlier times was somewhat different, and there are endless differences in details. The Jewish belief is also difficult to define. Time was when it was grossly anthropomorphic and "monolatrous" (as Charles expressively calls it). The Yahweh was only the tribal God of Israel, the gods of other nations were not false, but it was the duty of Israelites to reject them. As culture extended the other gods began to be denied and Yahweh remained the sole Lord and anthropomorphism also decreased, and explanations were devised to interpret passages in the Pentateuch that spoke of God as walking in the gardens, fighting duels with men and the like.

*He dilates at great length on the last, sorrow, and alleging—what is a great calumny—that the Muslims allow the first three, asks them why they do not allow this as well for God. Is it necessary to refer the reader to what is said in the Introduction and in other places in this commentary, that Muslims do not attribute any affections or emotions or anything implying change or limitation to God? He is infinitely above these things. Our Lord All was careful to insist upon making this qualification when using these words of God. Incomprehensible as He is in His essence, so is He in His attributes. It is sufficient for us to know that He is the Creator of these moral qualities, and His moral nature is such that His behaviour in relation to His creatures is as if He had these feelings in relation to them. See verse 20 note.

Well, whichever view these men (Jews and Christians) have of their God they seek to maintain that the great patriarch had the same view or conception of God, otherwise he was not a true believer, whereas all prophets down to Jesus have spoken of him with the utmost reverence. The answer to all these men is: Whatever view you hold, you hold it not on the authority of Reason but on the authority of *your* Scriptures (of course according to your way of interpreting them). Now these Scriptures did not exist in the days of Abraham. How can you then say that Abraham was a Jew or a Christian in his essential beliefs?

Verse 65. You who are always disputing and never come to agreement about the teachings of comparatively late prophets like Moses and Jesus, whose scriptures you profess to have, how can you have a face to assume certain knowledge about a prophet of whom you know nothing but the name.

SECTION 8.

Attempts to create doubts in the minds of believers by a temporary show of belief followed by relapse. Their dishonest dealings with other people. Their alteration of scriptures. Claim of divinity not attributable to any prophet.

71. And a party of the people of the Book say: Avow belief in that which is revealed to those who believe in the first part of the day, and disbelieve at the end of it; perhaps they may go back.

72. And believe not on any but those who follow your religion—say, Verily true guidance is guidance from God—(nor) that to others may be imparted the like of what hath been imparted to you, (nor that) they will dispute with you in the presence of your Lord. Say, Grace is in the hands of God. He bestoweth it on whom He willeth; and God is Ample-giving (*Wase'e*) Knowing.

73. He singleth out for His mercy whomsoever He will, and God is one whose favour is great.

74. And among the people of the Book are some, to (one of) whom if thou entrust a foison of gold, he will restore it to thee : And there are some of them to whom if thou entrust a dinar, he will not restore it to thee unless thou be ever instant with him. This—because they say, In the matter of heathen folk we are not accountable, and they utter a lie against God, knowing they do so :

75. Yea ! whosoever is true to his engagement, and feareth God, for verily God loveth those who fear (Him).

76. Verily they who barter their engagement with God, and their oath, for a paltry price—These ! no portion for them in the world to come ! and God will not speak to them, and will not purify them ! for them, a grievous torment.

67. And some truly are there among them who twist their tongues on the Book that ye may suppose it to be from the Book, yet it is not from God : and they utter a lie against God, knowing they do so.

78. It beseemeth not a man, that God should give him the Book and judgement. and prophecy, and that then he should say to men, “Be ye worshippers of me, besides God’s : but rather, “ Be ye divines (*Rabbaniyin*), since ye teach the Book and read it (yourselves).”

79. And He would not command you to take the angels or the prophets as lords. What ! Would He command you to become infidels after ye have been Muslims.

Verses 71. To make a show of belief for some time and then to avow that they were mistaken is the surest way to make ignorant people doubtful about the new creed to which they had gone over. Failing in other attempts the Jews now resorted to this tactics, but we know from history that that too was not of much avail, though it should have been particularly effective in this case, as, as shown in note to 2 : 89, it was the

Jews' own expectation of the advent of the Last Prophet and the description they gave of him from ancient prophecies that led principally to the conversion of these men.

Verse 72. The instructions of the Jews to their own people are continued. Grace here indicates prophethood. So mercy in verse 73. The parenthesis is similar to that in verse 35.

Verse 74. Dinar is a coin of the value of about 10s. They considered them free from all responsibility towards the unlearned Arabs. They were too low to be sinned against. An idea that comes up frequently in all religions when people become possessed with fanaticism. It should be particularly guarded against—not the less among ourselves.

Verse 76. 'Take a small price for' i. e. make light of it, deal slightingly with it for a small earthly profit. Note it is this very expression that is used where their regard for their scriptures is complained of; that is that they play fast and loose with them to suit their object—corrupt them.

Notice what they are warned of. They shall have no portion for them in the hereafter. God will not speak to them, nor will He purify them. Compare this with 2: 174 and see notes thereon.

Verse 77. *Yaluna alsinatahum bilkitab*, lit. twist their tongues with the book. Literally it means that in reading they so contrive to pronounce words that to the hearers they may appear as other words and the sense of the original may be changed. This is how corruptions in sacred texts begin, and that is the most feasible way when, as in the Prophet's day, the main scriptures were in writing and copies were spread in various places. And this was so very easy in the etymological Shemitic languages, chiefly Hebrew, where owing to defective system of writing, words could be read in a variety of ways. Idiomatically the expression means 'lie about the book,' change it to something else. See Ahmadi Commentator's note.

Verse 78. *Rabbani* (from *Rabb* or Lord) means a holy man who possesses knowledge of God and is devoutly devoted to him. The word may have been taken from the Jews, as Geiger says (*Judaism and Islam* p. 37), and the word may with them signify a particular high order among their religious doctors, but the meaning remains much the same, unless these religious doctors were not supposed to be good divines and holy pious men.

Tadrusun. Geiger thinks this word (root *drs*) was taken from Hebrew and is used in the Quran with its full Hebrew connotation, sear-

ching out deep meanings, though it may sometimes come to mere quibbling when it may be used in a bad sense.

SECTION 9.

All prophets charged to help the Prophet sent last to confirm their truth. Islam is the natural religion of man and implies an equal belief in all prophets. End of those who turn away from Islam.

80. And when God took the pledge of the prophets. Certainly what I have given you of the Book and (of) wisdom—then cometh a Prophet unto you to confirm that which is with you. Ye shall surely believe on him and aid him. He said: Do ye give the word for it and do ye accept my covenant thereon. They said we are resolved. He said: Be ye then the witness and I (also) will be of the witnesses along with you.

81. So whoever turneth away after this—these surely are the transgressors.

82. Other religion than of God desire they? And to Him doth submit everything that is in the Heavens and in the Earth, willingly or by compulsion, and to Him shall they be returned.

83. Say: We believe in God, and in what hath been sent down to us, and what hath been sent down to Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the Tribes, and in what was given to Moses, and Jesus, and the prophets, from their Lord. We make no difference between any of them. And to Him are we resigned (Muslims).

84. And whosoever desireth any other religion than Islam, that shall never be accepted from him, and in the next world he shall be among the losers.

85. How shall God guide a people who disbelieved after their belief and (after) they had borne witness that the Apostle was true, and clear proofs had come to them, and God guideth not an unjust people.

86. These ! their recompense, that the curse of God and of angels and of all men is on them.

87. Under it shall they abide for ever, their torment shall not be lightened for them, nor shall they be respited.

88. Save those who after this repent and amend ; for verily God is Gracious, Merciful !

89. Verily those who become infidels, after having believed, and then increase in infidelity—their repentance shall never be accepted ; and these ! they are those that have gone astray.

90. Surely those that disbelieve and die while they are unbelievers, from no one of them shall as much gold as the earth could contain be accepted, though he should offer it in ransom. These ! a grievous punishment awaiteth them ; and they shall have none to help them.

80. The prophets could render service to the Holy Prophet in three ways : (1) Prophesying about him and charging their people to believe in him when he comes (2) Aiding him and strengthening him spiritually in his apostolic work (3) Aiding and assisting his successors, the holy Imams in a similar way—and visibly also in the days of the Millenium. For the second and the third we have only the sayings of the Prophet and the Imams to rely upon and so these may be passed over as a matter for believers only. For the first we have positive evidence in the Old and New Testament, which abound in these prophecies. A discussion of these can be found in any of the numerous works on the evidences of Islam ; the best being the *Anisul Aalam* by Fakhru'l Islam, himself a Christian convert. English readers can find an excellent dissertation on these in Syed Ahmad Khan's *Essays*.

Seeing that the Scriptures are in such an unsatisfactory state, and in fact they represent only reminiscences of the old teachings it shows that

prophecy about the Prophet was such an essential feature of the Holy Prophet's teachings that whatever else might have been lost this was not lost, on the contrary it became so famous that Our Lord John the Baptist beginning to baptise and the people asking him whether he was Elias or Christ, and he replying in the negative they asked him whether he was *That* Prophet (John 1 : 20—26) showing that the prophecy about the great Prophet other than Christ was so well-known that the mere reference to him by 'That' was sufficient. In my note on 2 : 40 I have had occasion to comment on Our Lord Moses' prophecy contained in Deut 18 : 15—19. Here I can refer to one other prophecy only, that of Our Lord Jesus in John chap 16. 'Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go not away, for if I go not the Comfortor will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you . . . I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself, but whatever he shall hear that shall he speak : and he will shew you things to come.' (John 16 : 7—14). Here Our Lord clearly prophesies about the advent of a Prophet after him who would teach them things which he has not been able to teach as they were not yet ripe enough in knowledge and faith to receive them. Further discussion of this important prophecy will be made in the Supp.

This was the aid and service that the prophets of old rendered to Holy Prophet. Indeed it may be said that the success of no other Prophet was so completely due to prophecies about him as that of Our Holy Prophet. In my note on 2. 89 (vol 1) I have shown that the, what one would say, incredible effusion of success that began at Medina where the Prophet never went, nor sent any disciple to preach, was simply due to the fact that here at Medina there were some Jewish settlements—these jews used to talk of the Prophet shortly to appear and described his characteristic features derived from ancient prophecy, which the people of the place, coming to Haj found exactly fulfilled in the Holy Prophet. Then actually it was a wave of conversion that seized the people and within a few months the whole Medina was converted, and no one would listen to the Jews who out of jealousy and prejudice began to say that the Prophet they were speaking of should be an Israelite, not an Ishmaelite. Even Sir William Muir has had to admit that this was the chief cause of the phenomenal success that the new religion had at Medina. See his *Life of Mohammad*.

This covenant was taken of the prophets in their pre-existent state before they were born in this world. This doctrine of pre-existence of the

Holy Prophet and Imams is based on hundreds of traditions and is universal in Islam. In one form or another it is also common to all religions and was particularly familiar to the Jews and Christians. It remains to say that it is a perfectly sound rational doctrine agreeable not only to the truths of Spiritualism, but to all sound philosophy. It has been discussed at some length in my *Principles of Shia Theology*. The main lines of the argument may be summarily given in the Supplement.

In the beginning of the verse the words 'Surely that which I have given you of the Book and the Wisdom' hang without a predicate. Some suppose that 'This is,' is to be understood here. The trend of the succeeding words seems to show that the implication here is that these are to pass away (and then a Prophet will be raised to revive them by attesting to them).

Verse 81. That is, those who profess to follow these prophets.

Verse 82. However much people love to adore the idols of their imagination, nature asserts itself and they are constrained to believe in the One God of Reason, and to acknowledge that all else they adore is mere nothing. This is most obvious in the case of the Unity of God as this is the cardinal point of faith, but it is also true of the other true doctrines as well. Men come to them somehow in some form. Thus though transmigration of souls is the prevailing doctrine among Hindus yet Heaven and Hell have also to be compromised with some way. How much the Prophet is believed among them against their will is seen in their mourning over Our Lord Husain.

Some commentators say that however hateful Islam may be to infidels they are forced to see its truth when the conquests of Islam make it a question of life and death for them. But the point in the verse is that even without any guidance or other action on the part of men nature itself compels men to acknowledge the true doctrines (chiefly about God) however much it may be against their inclinations. How much with growth of knowledge and culture the civilized world is Islamised Christianity knows only too well. Luther was charged with subscribing to Islamic Principles, if not embracing Islam actually. Newman's Lectures give other examples which are as startling. Of the Hindu saints and reformers the very names of Nanak, Kabir, Ram Mohan Roy and Dayanand Saraswati are sufficient to mention.

Verse 83. It is a cardinal point of belief in Islam that all prophets from the earliest times, and in all countries taught essentially the same

doctrines (that is, about essentials such as Unity of God, Inspiration Last Judgement &c). Christians on the other hand believe that the revelation of God to His prophets was progressive, so that the very conception of God that the earlier prophets had was defective and incorrect. They are compelled to take that view by their belief in their Scriptures which they regard as; somehow (at least substantially) genuine and inspired. This view may be tenable on the view (to which the modern Christians are coming) that truth in matters of religion is of very little importance, but to us it looks blasphemous affecting the very character of God. See further in Supp.

Verses 84. This must be so if, as we believe, God sets any value to Truth. There is nothing more absurd and dangerous than the idea prevalent in these days of religious indolence that it is a matter of indifference which religion a man adopts—they can all help to elevate him morally and spiritually. Than indifference towards Truth there cannot be a greater moral suicide.

Verses 85. This and the following verses are said in Qummi's and other commentaries to refer to those who *virtually* made themselves infidels by rejecting, wilfully and deliberately, the express declaration of the Holy Prophet about the Imamate of Our Lord Ali, continuing at the same time to profess their belief in the Holy Prophet. The Sunni commentators take the verse in its general meaning without enquiring if it refers to any particular people or case. But the Ahmadi Commentator makes the verse refer to the Jews. He apparently considers that "the apostle" here whom they bore witness to is Our Lord Moses who bore testimony to the Holy Prophet. They rejected the latter though professing their belief in the former. In this consisted their turning infidels after their faith (*Iman*). This explanation is quite feasible. But the other interpretation is also equally or even more applicable. Only in a very loose sense of the word could the word *Iman* be used of the faith of the Jews, who had been infidels ever since the days of Our Lord Jesus Christ and even earlier. So too when the word *al-Rasul* is used without a context showing clearly to the contrary the first impression is that it is used for the Holy Prophet. It seems to me that while the verse was revealed against the Jews it was so worded as to warn the Musalmans also, that they too should be on their guard as to this kind of infidelity.

Verses 86. All mankind. That is, all who know of them and their perfidy or happen to think of it. They themselves curse themselves in their sober moods in their subconscious life at least.

Verse 87. The Ahmadi Commentator notes that "Instead of Hell here it is the curse in which the guilty shall abide and thus a light is thrown on the nature of Hell." The reader can well understand his meaning and purpose. Granted, I reply, (for argument's sake) but the most it can show is that the physical torments are of spiritual origin, as acute mental anguish can produce serious disease in the body.

Verse 89. This verse can well apply to the Jews. Their infidelity began with their rejection of Our Lord Jesus, and it increased in the time of the Holy Prophet (Siraj). But why will their repentance not be accepted? Clearly the verse speaks of individuals who turned infidels after faith and then increased in their infidelity, and not of nations who did one thing in the first century and the other in the sixth. The fact is persons who fall through temptation may repent, but they who so effectually kill their conscience that they are not content with the worldly gain they sought for, but turn actual enemies and seek to exterminate those they robbed as the Musalmans did with the Imams—these men have little capacity for true repentance left with them, nor, in the special case referred to, can they in the least make amends for the wrong they have done. So their repentance cannot be accepted in the ordinary sense of the word, that is they cannot hope to be forgiven, though the repentance, such as it is, may do them some good.

SECTION 10.

Sacrifice the essence of virtue. Islam possesses the main features of Abraham's religion. Mecca and its security. Exhortation and warning.

PART IV.

91. By no means shall ye attain to goodness till ye spend in charity out of whatever ye are attached to (*mimma tuhubbun* out of what ye love); and whatever ye give away, of a truth God knoweth it.

92. All food was lawful to the children of Israel except what Israel (Jacob) forbade himself before the Law was sent down. Say: Bring ye then the Law and read it if ye be men of truth.

93. Then whoso after this inventeth the lie about God : These are evil-doers.

94. Say : God speaketh truth. Follow, therefore, the religion of Abraham, the pure in faith, and he was not of those who join other gods to God.

95. Verily the first temple that was founded for mankind was surely that in Becca, Blessed, and a guidance to human beings.

96. In it are evident signs, the standing-place of Abraham ; and he who entereth it is safe. And the pilgrimage to the temple, is laid on all man as (a service due) to God—those who are able to journey thither. And as to him who believeth not, then verily God is independent of all the worlds.

97. Say : O people of the Book ! Why disbelieve ye the signs of God ? And God is witness of what ye do.

98. Say : O people of the Book ! why hinder ye him who believeth from the path of God ? Ye fain would make it crooked, whereas ye are (its) witness ! But God is not heedless of what ye are doing.

99. O believers ! if ye obey some amongst those who have received the Scriptures, they will turn you after your belief into infidels.

100. But how can ye become infidels, when the signs of God are recited to you, and his Prophet is among you ? Whoever holdeth fast by God is already guided to the straight path.

91. We have only to think of this verse to see how utterly vain it is for us to imagine that we have attained even to the minimum of virtue as required in Islam. We may get the heart to give away all we have in charity and yet do not reach even the portals of virtue. The

minimum that we have kept for our bare existence will still be something which we like to have for ourselves and it will pain us to part with it. That even is sufficient to thrust us away, and not until we get over that last shred of bare self-regard can we attain to the minimum of virtue. It requires nothing short of utter, absolute, selflessness to be virtuous in any real sense of the word. It makes a man's heart faint to think of this verse. Also mark the wide implication of the words "of whatever ye love." It is not riches alone, it is everything of which we can have regard. A man may be charitable about his money but may be somewhat miser about his books. These sorts of failings must also be got over. The final stages are perhaps those of respect, reputation on the one hand and immediate relations, wives, children &c. on the other. There should remain no scruple, no hitch—in the heart, not in the mind alone—to sacrifice these when occasions require it. As said before virtue requires nothing short of utter selflessness. Any one who reflects on this—it is a very wide thing to reflect upon—will be convinced that none but the prophets and the Imams were able to attain to this high standard. An ideal example of this showing everything in its fullest form will be found in the well-known tragedy of Karbala.

Verses 92. This verse has apparently very little connection with the previous one, but the succeeding verses make the connection perceptible. The previous verse has made it clear that for virtue it is essential to have a true, perfect, command over all self-feelings. Is that sufficient? In its fullest sense it may be said to be so, but there is one distinct class of feelings, not consciously held dear, but clinging to man in a more real sense, which also have to be got over. It is the prejudices. For the perfect man it is necessary to get over these also. First the heart has to be purified and then the head also. Then and then only will a man be able to rise to Islam which is nothing or less than submission of the whole self, head and heart alike, to the will of God. This verse therefore deals with an instance of mere prejudices, due to tradition, preventing men from accepting true faith.

The Jews objected to Muslims making use of certain foods which according to them the Law of Moses did not allow. The answer is "Bring the Law and read it if ye are truthful." You have not the Law as it was left by Moses (as modern scholars have fully proved and even religious savants have accepted); you have only a book embodying traditions and reminiscences, some of which may be true, but many are false or distorted. Now the truth of the matter is that food of all kinds (which the Law of Islam allows) was lawful for the Israelites also.

Only Jacob (Israel) gave up using camel's flesh and other things which did not suit him. The tradition-bound people made it a law of their religion.

Verse 94. See note on 2: 130, 135. Not being a polytheist seems but a poor compliment for a great Prophet, but it is really the highest that can be given to a man about his conception of God. No conception that we can form can be entirely free from anthropomorphism and hence polytheistic implications. The conception of Absolute Indivisible Unity, having no distinction even of substance and attributes and of attributes as between themselves, all of which becomes tantamount to polytheism, if duly considered, is a great thing not attainable to ordinary mortals.

Verse 95. Bakka is the same as Mecca. The Kaaba there is the first House or Temple built for the worship of mankind, for it existed even before Abraham who only purified it of idols and rebuilt it. See 2: 125 and notes thereon. Sir William Muir admits the very great antiquity of Kaaba arguing from the fact that universal homage was paid to this temple from the earliest times of which we have any memory that the tradition must have its beginnings in a very remote antiquity.

Verse 96. For the *Maqam Ibrahim*, the standing place of Abraham, see note on 2: 125. It is called manifest signs, the reference apparently being to the miracles that may be witnessed daily by the faithful praying devoutly in the place. It is a pity that, being almost everyday occurrences and being necessarily limited in their scope, no regular records are kept or cared for and thus all are suffered to pass into oblivion. Also it is a fact that, as owing to religious persecution very few Shias go for pilgrimage to Mecca, there are not so many miracles witnessed here as in the shrines of the Imams at Najef, Karbala, Kazimain, Tus, Samirra some of which must be in the knowledge of every well acquainted person. This very year 1931 has witnessed no less than 200 miracles, miraculous cures and the like, most of which have been registered by the Iraq government after careful official enquiry. (See Sarfaraz of 4th July 1931). Also this must be so in the nature of things. The *Maqame Ibrahim* owes its sanctity merely to association with the name of Abraham.

SECTION 11.

The believers should remain firmly united in true faith and not fall into schisms. Necessity of spiritual guides for apostolic work.

101. O ye who believe! Fear God as He deserveth to be feared (*Hagga tuqateh*) and see that ye die not except that ye have (truly) become Muslims, (*ua la tamatunna illa wa antum Muslimana*).

102. And hold fast by the cord of God, all ye together, and break not loose from it (or be not divided, *la tatafarragu*) and remember God's favour towards you, how that when ye were enemies He joined your hearts together, and so by His favour ye have become brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of fire and He delivered you therefrom. Thus doth God clearly show you His signs that haply ye may be guided.

103. And that there may be among you a people who call men towards virtue and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong, and these are they who will fare well.

104. And be ye not like those who have formed divisions, and fallen to variance after the clear proofs have come to them. These! a terrible punishment is (reserved) for them.

105. The day when faces shall become bright, and faces shall turn black! And as to those whose faces shall have turned black.....What! after your belief have ye become infidels? Taste then the chastisement, for that ye were disbelieving."

106. And as to those whose faces shall have become whiter, they shall be within the mercy of God; therein shall they abide for ever.

107. These are the statutes of God, We recite them to thee in truth. And God willeth not injustice to mankind.

108. And whatever is in the Heavens, and whatever is on the Earth, is God's. And to God shall all matters be committed.

101. 'Fear God as He deserveth to be feared' that is fear Him out of love and reverence for Him, not merely on account of consequences His displeasure may bring upon you. See note on verse 30 above. Also your fear must be commensurate to the estimation that is justly due to Him in your mind. Note also that it is a great thing to be a Musalman truly. The verse is addressed to the believers.

Verse 102. Hold fast to the rope (habl) of God. The image is that of a rope hanging down from heavens to the earth so that by holding to it men may climb up to Heaven. In some traditions this is identified with the Book of God, but according to the greater number it is the Prophet and the Imams. It may be both, the one being no way distinct from the other. The holding fast to Book or the Holy Prophet and the Imams would primarily mean an intense spirit of attachment and devotion to them (from which the rest will follow) and then the rising to the Presence of God would be facilitated

Do not split up. Schisms can form either by neglecting or disregarding the Word of God altogether and taking to one's fancies, or by errors about the teaching thereof. The former few would do consciously, so it is necessary to be on the guard about the latter. And so it appears that while all sects agree as the matter of faith on the Quran there are infinite differences among them. Would it be meet for God to send down a rope which is so intangible that few can perceive it distinctly? This shows that the phrase fits in more with the Prophet and the Imams—at all events they are indissolubly bound up with it, form one of its intertwining cords.

'So by the favour of God ye become brethren' It was nothing short of a miracle that the Arabs who were in a state of continual and mutual warfare and in whom the slightest incidents led to tribal wars continued for generations were so changed in ten years—nay may more—that they forgot almost all about it and they all became veritable brothers unified in the *Esprit de corps* of Islam. History knows not a single other instance of such moral revolution in such a brief period of time. And of the causes and influences, if one would consider them, there would be found nothing worth the name except the over-powering personality of one man, the Holy Prophet. And it was not so much his teaching that did it—that was very little imbibed by the people—it was almost entirely due to his practice, his active efforts to divert the thoughts and feelings of his—most refractory—people into new channels. That is the difference between teaching by mere preaching and that by actual active work. Nothing but the grace of God could have effected so great a result in such a

short time and that is accounted here as the providential favour of God. True it was only the beginning of his great work, but the beginning itself was great beyond measure.

The passage is, however, meant to set up an ideal for the Musalmans for all time. If Musalmans are Musalmans they will be brothers and there *can* be no fighting among them—sectarian fights being of course excluded, they being done in the spirit of religion itself. And the ideal is not merely an ideal. It is a reality that is most deep-rooted in the hearts of every Musalman. There *can* be no fighting between Musalmans—of the same sect at least. Racial and political hatred which is the bane of Christian nations is impossible for the Musalmans. It may be that ambitious kings may fight each other, but it will only be a fight between kings, the people will have no hand in it, and if they have a voice in their governments these wars will be increasingly difficult. There *can* be no such thing as *countries* fighting one another—that disgusting thing which is so marked in wars in Christian countries. Who has failed to observe the outburst of hatred among the English against the Germans and the Germans against the English during the Great War? Such a thing is, it is emphatically asserted, impossible for the Musalmans, and, anybody can see, that must make wars between Muslim countries impossible, if people have any hand in their governments. The Muslims, of one sect at least all the world over, are brothers—really feel themselves as brothers, and it is impossible for them to fight each other. That is not a matter of theory, but a living reality; and in it consists one great superiority of Islam to all other religions—Christianity in particular.

'You were on the brink of a pit of fire.' That has obvious reference to salvation in the next world. It is a craze of the Ahmadi Commentator that everywhere he tries to interpret *fire* as a figure of speech for war.

'That perchance ye may have guidance.' Notice, guidance is something to come after all these stages of brotherhood in faith and redemption from fire have been reached. What that is is indicated in the next verse—namely that they should be under willing subjection to holy and pious rulers.

Verse 103. 'To invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong' is every one knows a duty of everyone—no one excepted. Why then is it said that "there should be an Ummat (party) among you" who do this? Surely it is meant that there should be some persons whose special vocation should be this; they should have special capacity for this work, and they should know what is right and what is wrong

in a better way than the generality of men. Just think carefully of this and it would be easily clear which are the persons referred to in this verse. In a loose superficial way the words may be thought to refer to the divines, Mujtahids, who correspond to clergy in Islam. But they cry out with one voice that all their science of Law (*Fiqh*) is doubtful, not certain, their teachings about the dogmas of faith even are not in all cases more than opinions, much is no more than groping in the dark. Their differences are well-known, and that is the death of their universal leadership. So, too, all cannot agree about their piety and devotion, and that takes away much of their effectiveness. As to their capacity for practical work that too is often in inverse proportion to their piety and devotion. Surely the thing designed by God is something perfect, the words in their full meaning cannot apply to any but the Imams, who are perfect in knowledge, perfect in piety and devotion, perfect in capacity for work—working both spiritually and by physical means.

The idea of the whole is that people should put themselves in willing subjection to these people and receive of their guidance. There is no question of their temporal sovereignty, for there is "no compulsion in religion" (2 : 256) but it comes to it if people are true believers. It should be noted that according to some Shia readings the word in the original is '*Ayemmatun*' 'leaders' not '*Ummatun*' 'people.'

Verse 104. It is the duty of all to keep their eyes open for *Bayyinat* 'clear arguments.' We have sketched the main lines of these in the Introduction.

Verse 105. The rejection of the Imams is here called *Kufr* 'infidelity' *after faith* (Iman). That is it comes to it spiritually. See verses 85 and 89 above and notes thereon.

SECTION 12.

The true Muslims are the best people raised up for the guidance of mankind. They should not fear any harm from the Jews. The good among them are an exception. Their strength against the Muslims shall be a failure. They should not be taken for fiends.

109. .Ye are the best people (*Ummat*) that have been raised up unto mankind. Ye enjoin the Just, and ye forbid the Evil, and ye believe in God; And if the People of the

Book had believed, it had surely been better for them ! Believers there are among them, but the most of them are perverse.

110. They will never inflict on you save (some) annoyance ; and if they do battle with you, they shall turn their backs to you : then they shall not be succoured.

111. Abasement is made to cleave to them wherever they are found, except under a compact with God and a compact with men ; and they have drawn down the wrath of God, and humiliation (*Maskanat*) is made to cleave to them. This—for that they believed not in the signs of God, and slew the prophets unjustly. This—because they disobeyed, and became transgressors.

112. (Yet) all are not alike : Among the people of the Book is an upright folk, who recite the signs of God in the night-season, and they prostrate themselves in adoration (*yasjudun*).

113. They believe in God and in the latter day, and enjoin justice, and forbid evil, and speed on in good works ; and these are of the righteous.

114. And of whatever good ye do, ye shall not be denied it. And God knoweth those who fear Him.

115. But as for the infidels, their possessions and their children shall avail them nothing against God. They shall be the inmates of the fire, they shall abide therein (eternally).

116. The likeness of what they expend in this present life is like that of a freezing wind, which falleth upon the corn fields of a people who have wronged themselves and destroyed it. It was not God that wronged them, but it was themselves that had been wronging them.

117. O ye who have believed ! form not intimacies among others than yourselves. They will not be remiss in doing you mischief. They love what distresseth you : Their spite hath already shewn itself out of their mouths, but more grievous is what their breasts conceal. We have assuredly made clear the signs to you if ye will (but) understand.

118. See now ! Ye are those that love them, but they love you not though ye believe the entire Book. And when they meet you, they say, We believe ; but when they are apart, they bite their finger's ends at you out of wrath. Say : Die you in your rage. Verily God well knoweth whatever is in (peoples') hearts. (*Sudur* breasts).

119. If good befalleth you it grieveth them and when ill lighteth on you they rejoice at it. But if ye be steadfast and fear God, their craft shall in no way harm you. For God is round about their doings.

Verses 109. The Musalmans can be called "the best of people" *Khaira Ummatin* only in the sense that the Israelites were said in 2 : 44 to have been made superior to all creation. It is only the Prophet and the Imans and the holiest men (who are compared to the minor prophets among the Israelites) that constitute "the best of people." For the community as a whole not ten thousand such verses can make us believe that they were "the best of people." "Excellent people" as Our Lord Jafarel Sadiq said "who killed Hunsain," the grandson of the Prophet. The extent of depravity to which Musalmans had gone soon after the Prophet can be judged from the fact that thousands of women begat, in Medina itself, illegitimate children owing to the savage hordes of Yezid. The Holy Temple of Kaaba was razed to the ground and the Prophet's Mosque was profaned with the dung of horses and mules. Caliph Walid held drinking party on the roof of Kaaba. Such was the depravity of the people about the time of Caliph Mamun that when Kabul being conquered the Hindu governor was compelled to embrace Islam he did so on the condition that he would not practise sodomy ! (Al Beruni's India). Emperor Vladimir of Russia was nearly inclined to become Musalman, but hearing of this vice among the people he got disgusted with their religion, (Stanley's Lectures on Eastern Church).

It may be noted that in this verse too, as in 103 above, according to some Shia traditions the word is *ayemmatin* not *Ummatin*. But whether that is so or not the words in the verse in their full meaning can apply to the Imams, and them only.

Note that faith in God is a very great thing. It means not only true belief about God but a living faith in Him, His care, succour and love in the most trying and dreadful of trials and tribulations. It is in these alone that one has a chance to know of his own faith and judge of the others.

"*Ahlul Kitab*" People of the Book. That is, Jews and Christians who professed a revealed religion having Scriptures, believed to be inspired writings. This in distinction to the Arabs who were *Ummis*, who had no such Scriptures. This was the primitive signification of the word, and in it as a race or community the word seems used here. Technically after the revelation of the Quran the Arab Musalmans also became a People of the Book. So of them some were believers having been converted to Islam.

Verse 110. A prophecy most remarkably fulfilled. The Jews had powerful settlements in Medina and other places. But besides their own power they had the sympathies of the whole country in their fighting with the Musalmans. But though they were given fight to soon after the battle of Beder, when the Musalmans were ridiculously few in numbers, yet they always fled before the Musalmans. The polytheists, who gave them secret promises of help, never came to their aid when they were in distress. They, the various parties of them, did not even aid each other when one after the other of them were attacked.

The unreflecting may account the prophecy to a "wonderful" insight on the part of the Prophet, but it is difficult to produce another instance of this in history. In a few years they were practically exterminated in Arabia, as if they were nothing themselves and had more to help them.

Verse 111. Another and still more remarkable prophecy which is being fulfilled to this day. They will never be rulers in the world or a free nation having free independent dominions of their own, for in that consists the political honour of a people. All the political freedom they can have is either by coming into treaties with the Muslim States, here called rope (*habl*) from God, which they are to hold fast for their protection, or by entering into treaties with other non-Muslim powers. In no

case they are to be free and independent themselves. So long, at least, as they are Jews in any real sense of the word, that is, are a religious community professing the ancient creed. At the present day many Jews are Jews only as many Christians are Christians and many Turks are Musalmans.

Verses 112 to 114. The commentators generally understand these highly complimentary verses as referring to the Jews and Christians who became converted to Islam. And this is not improbable as the *Ahlal Kitab* 'People of the Book' is often used in the primitive signification of the word explained in note to verse 109 above. But it is not at all necessary. The Jews and Christians who persisted in their unbelief knowing fully about the Prophet by immediate contact were not all the Jews and Christians in the world. Like to those that were converted, there may have been hundreds of others who would not have been slow to accept the Prophet had they but known of him well. They therefore were in the condition of true believers (in a reasonable sense of the word) in the days of *Fatrah*, the age preceding the advent of Our Holy Prophet. In short Islam requires us to recognize the virtues of good, truly devout people in all religions, so long as they are not guilty of indolently neglecting to find the truth. They will be rewarded for their virtues in the Hereafter. It is only neglecting to receive the truth, after they have a chance of knowing about it that blights all they do. That too, we are sure, will be rewarded in some way in future life, but it is nothing compared to the sin of this indolence.

Verses 115 & 116. "The failure which is throughout the Quran prophesied for the enemies of Islam is here referred to. The parable is similar to the one given in 68 : 17-33."

Verses 117 & 118. "This injunction against contracting intimate friendship with other than Muslims should be read along with what is said in 68 : 8, 9." "Allah does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you on account of your religion and have not driven you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly; surely Allah loves the doers of justice. Allah only forbids you respecting those who made war upon you on account of your religion and drove you forth from your homes and backed others in your expulsion, that you make friends with them." These two verses lay down a principle which explains the relations that may exist between Muslims and non-Muslims. As the preceding verses and as what follows shows the Jews assisted the enemies of Islam to make war upon the Muslims, so the Muslims were warned against close and intimate relations with them.

SECTION 13.

Preparation for the battle of Ohad. Some men lose heart. Divine assistance at Beder with angels. Its significance. God's forgiveness.

120. And when thou didst go forth from thy family at early morn, that thou mightest place the faithful in their positions for the battle—and God is Hearing, Knowing.

121. When two parties of you were inclined to show cowardice, though God was the guardian of them both; and in God, then, let the faithful trust.

122. And God had already succoured you at Beder, when ye were humble. Fear God, then, that haply ye may be thankful.

123. When thou didst say to the faithful, Is it not enough for you that your Lord should assist you with three thousand angels sent down (from on high)?

124. Aye: but if ye be steadfast and fear God, and the foe come upon you in this very instant, your Lord will help you with five thousand angels in their cognisances! (*Musawwemin*).

125. And God did not ordain it save as a good news to you and that with it your hearts might be assured—for succour cometh only from God, the Mighty, the Wise.

126. That He might cut off the uttermost part of those who believed not, or cast them down so that they might be baffled (in their aims).

127. It is none of thy concern whether He be turned unto them mercifully or chastise them: for verily they are wrong-doers.

128. And whatever is in the Heavens and the Earth is God's! He forgiveth whom He will, and punisheth whom He will, for God is Forgiving, Merciful.

120. It is to the events of the famous battle of Ohad that this and the following sections are mainly devoted. In the third year of the Hijra the Meccans marched against the Muslims of Medina with an army three thousand strong. Being utterly foiled and defeated at Beder the desire to punish the Musalmans was keener than ever. The Meccan chief Abu Sufyan swore that he would not even wash himself till he had wreaked vengeance on the Musalmans. He ordered all families to refrain from mourning over their dead till he had fully punished them. The vow, of course, became soon a trouble and he was obliged to ease himself by fulfilling it nominally. Coming with a few persons to a place *Qarqaratilqadr* three miles from Medina, he attacked and killed two men, burnt some houses and heaps of fodder and made off. The Prophet hearing of this went out to punish him but found only bags of roasted flour he had left to lighten his burden in his flight back to home. But even in this nominal revenge he did not fail to do some thing. Before the formal raid he contrived to come secretly to the Jews of Medina and negotiated with them for attacking the Prophet (see note on verse 10 above). Active preparations for joining all tribes continued. This would certainly have been fatal for the handful of Musalmans, but one event done in pursuance of the Prophet's policy explained in note to 2 : 190 expediated the attack without waiting for complete confederacy.

Being afraid of the Musalmans in the north, the Meccans sent a trading caravan to Syria by the Iraq route. That too was cut off, and so, as was desired, the Meccans could wait no longer and resolved on an immediate attack. Still they had made immense preparations. For men they had three thousand choicest men from Meccan and the neighbouring tribes. For arms and provisions all the money, 5,000 Misqals of gold, that Abu Sufyan had charge of on account of the Meccan Trading Union is said to have been spent upon it. This is said to be referred to in 8 : 36. Five hundred camels and two hundred horses and mules were taken merely for the carrying of arms and provisions. Beautiful women were taken to sing songs to keep tickling the warriors to manliness.

When the Prophet heard of this he held a council of war. He himself sided with the opinion of the hypocrite leader Abdullah 'bn Obay that they should only defend themselves, but the most influential Ansars (under that haughty chief Saad 'bn Maaz) were for going out to meet the enemy in open field. The Prophet ultimately acceded to this and went out to Ohad with 1000 men, including 300 men under Abdullah 'bn Obay who soon left off with his men saying, his advice was not accepted and he

could no more join the Musalmans. His example was about to be followed by two other parties (referred to in the next verse), but they yielded to better reason.

Coming to the hill of Ohad the Prophet noticed a pass through which the infidels could come in to attack the Musalmans from their rear. He stationed here 50 archers under Abdullah 'bn Jubair enjoining them strictly not to leave the place whatever might happen to the Musalmans. After this the fight began, and, as might be expected, the Musalmans were completely victorious and the infidels began to flee. Who fought and who did not is to be read in histories, but now was the time for the Musalmans. They fell to plunder, and seeing this the archers who had been stationed at the pass could not restrain themselves. However much their leader remonstrated, they all slipped away and only 12 remained with him. Seeing this Khalid who had kept his detachment there came down through the pass and began to cut the Musalmans (now in disorder) like cabbages. Confusion seized them and they began to flee. Those that remained fighting could not sometimes distinguish friends from foes, and some Musalmans were killed at the hands of Musalmans. The infidels now directed a severe attack at the Prophet. He was severely wounded and fell into a pit, and a cry was raised that the Prophet was slain. At this the remaining few also took to flight. There were now only Our Lord Ali, Abu Dajjana and Sahl 'bn Hunaid to fight in front of the Prophet and protect him, and to say nothing of their fighting in the main battle, their fighting on this occasion will remain memorable to the end of the world. Suffice it to say that the infidels could not resist this long enough and retreated crying out threats to come back next year. They dared not stop even to take some captives among the fugitives whom they could easily have picked up here and there.

The Musalmans lost some of the most noted of veterans in this battle. Most notable of all is Hamza, the uncle of the Prophet. Hinda the wife of Abu Sufyan, mother of Moavyah had engaged an Abyssinian slave Wahshi to kill one of the three, the Prophet, or Our Lord Ali, or Hamza. When he was killed the man took out his liver and brought it as a present to Hinda. She chewed it and ate pieces of it but had a vomiting. She then washed the pieces and made them into a garland for her neck. Coming to his corpse she took some other parts from his body and treated them similarly. (And yet the Prophet freely pardoned all when, on the conquest of Mecca, this feindish woman with her husband and son made a pretence of embracing Islam).

Retreating from Ohad Abu Sufyan encamped at Hamraul Asad, 8 miles away. Here he began to repent for his hurried retreat. The

victory, if victory it could be called, was but a nominal one. The Musalmans had suffered but little loss, much less than his own people had, and so all had come to nothing. With these thoughts he set again to prepare for another attack. But learning from a chief of Khazaa that the Prophet was coming on with a big army to attack him, he lost heart and sped away as soon as possible. See note on verse 171.

Verse 121. The two tribes are Bunu Salma and Banu Harisa.

Verse 122. The battle of Beder is well-known, in which 313 ill-equipped and almost famished Musalmans routed the Meccan army 1000 strong. We will give an account of it in notes to 8th Surah.

According to Qummi's commentary the word according to Imams' reading was *Zuajaa* 'weak' instead of *azillatun* 'humble.'

Verse 125. Thus, so far as the fighters were concerned, the object and the good of sending down the angels was only to strengthen their hearts. But the numbers 1000 in case of Beder (8 : 9), 3000 in the case of this battle (verse 123) and 5000 promised later (verse 124) said to refer to the battle of Confederates (Ahzab)—seem to have some meaning, and though we have no traditions on the point we can guess it, if we realize, that these battles, particularly Beder, were the prototypes of the great battles that would be fought against the forces of evil in the days of Millenium. In these battles it was not merely the ignorant infidels that were fighting, but Satan and his forces were also keenly interested in the issue, and in them they would have done all they could by their invisible, occult powers to help the cause of the infidels. Not only would they strengthen their hearts with fiendish zeal and resolution; they would do a lot by means of what Theosophical spiritualists call materialization. The angels were surely required to see to all this.

Verse 127. When after the flight of the Musalmans the Prophet, who was left alone in the battlefield, was severely wounded by the infidels and fell into a pit, he in his agony uttered these words, "How can that people prosper who deal thus with their Prophet." Immediately on these words being uttered this revelation was received. He had no concern in the matter. God might forgive them.

Note the reason for showing mercy 'for surely they are unjust.' As the Ahmadi Commentator notes "The reason given for showing mercy, is really one which calls for punishment, yet so great is the Divine Love and Mercy for man that no reason for not showing mercy is too great for Divine Mercy to overcome it. The all-comprehensiveness of the Divine Mercy expressed in this verse is unapproached in sacred literature."

SECTION 14.

Usury condemned. Obedience to the Apostle and piety and charity enjoined. These will lead to success and power; the accidental reverse at Ohad need not dishearten them.

129. O ye who believe! Devour not usury doubling it over and again, and fear God that ye may prosper.

130. And beware of the fire that is prepared for the unbelievers.

131. And obey God and the Apostle that ye may be shown mercy.

132. And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a paradise, vast as the Heavens and the Earth, prepared for the God-fearing.

133. Those who give alms, alike in prosperity and in straitness, and who restrain (their) anger, and forgive men! for God loveth those who do good.

134. And those, when they do a shameful deed or commit a wrong to their souls, remember God and implore forgiveness for their sins—and who will forgive sins but God?—and persist not knowingly in what they have done amiss.

135. As for these! pardon from their Lord shall be their reward and gardens 'neath which the rivers flow; for ever shall they abide therein: And how excellent the reward of those work (for it).

136. Already, have examples gone before your time. Traverse the earth, then, and see what hath been the end of those who used to give the lie to them.

137. This is an exposition to mankind, and a guidance, and an admonition to the God-fearing!

138. (Wherefore) do not lose heart nor grieve, for ye are the higher of them if ye be believers.

139. If a wound hath befallen you, a wound like it hath already befallen *those people*—these days we cause to change about among men—and that God may know those who have believed, and that he may take martyrs from among you,—and God loveth not the wrong-doers—

140. And that God may purge those who believe, and slowly destroy the infidels.

141. Think ye that ye should enter Paradise while God has not yet taken knowledge of those among you who strive hard, and of those who steadfastly endure?

142. And ye were wont to desire death ere ye met it. So indeed ye have now seen it while ye were looking on.

Verse 129. *Azaafan muzafaf* 'multiplying over and over again' is taken by some literally, whence they argue that it is only compound interest that is forbidden. But it is only a common idiomatic expression meaning over and above. All interest, simple or compound, is unlawful. For the prohibition see Chap. II, sec. 38 (Vol. I).

The mention of this at the beginning of this section, which is meant to teach how success can be achieved, seems meant to show that indulging in this practice develops ignoble egoistic vices in character which are essentially detrimental to political success. As charity enlarges the heart and prepares man for all kinds of sacrifices, so the practice of taking interest has a shrinking effect on character, and the history of the Jews is a living example of what it may come to in political matters. Also as borrowing money on interest is as much condemned as the lending of it, there may be a prophetic reference to the fate of Muslim kingdoms in these days—if instead of borrowing money on interest from other peoples they had tapped their own resources, they would not have been so emasculated, and the foreigners would not have had the opportunity to interfere in their affairs.

Verse 133. On the other hand, restraining of anger, pardoning and doing good to each other strengthen the bond of union which is so necessary for success. One of Our Lord Hasan's, slaves having on one occasion

thrown a boiling hotdish on him obtained his liberty along with monetary help by reciting this verse. Fearing that he would be punished he began repeating this verse. As he said, "Those who restrain their anger", Our Lord said he was not angry: "And pardon men" "I pardon thee" Our Lord hastend to say. "And God loveth the doers of good:" "I give thee liberty and four hundred pieces of silver." "A noble instance of moderation and generosity" says Sale. Such must be the response that the Word of God should get from the faithful.

Verse 138. *Sunan*, plural of *Sunnat*, meaning a way, or rule, or manner of acting or conducts. Hence the significance here is ways and examples of God's dealing with the righteous and the wicked. These should inspire faith in those now dejected after the reverses in this battle of Ohad.

Verse 138. The words must be noted. They are for all time. *La tahenu* 'do not disgrace yourselves by succumbing to dejection.' If you have faith in God you must believe that you have His succour and you will have the upper hand. Anyway trust in Him ought to keep you proud and cheerful. If you doubt that God will help you as He best sees fit you are not believers.

Verse 139. "That Allah knows all that is seen or unseen and all that is manifest or concealed, is asserted in numerous places in the Holy Quran. The *knowing* here and the not knowing in verse 141 refer to a knowledge of the event. Allah knew who *would prove* themselves true believers, who would strive hard in His way, and who would be patient under trials; but who *did* prove themselves true believers, who *did* strive hard and who *were* patient in suffering could only be said to be known when these things had happened." So the Ahmadi Commentator, but see verse 139 and note.

Verse 142. Alluding to the zeal with which they had volunteered themselves. Stories are related of boys who were to be excluded on account of their age trying to get into the force by manoeuvres.

SECTION 15.

Would Muslims go back to idolatry if the Prophet were to die or be killed? Companions of prophets did not give way before sufferings.

143. And Mohammed is no more than an apostle; apostles have already passed away before him; if then he die or be slain will ye turn upon your heels. And he who

turneth upon his heels will by no means do harm to God in the least, and He will reward the grateful.

144. It is not for any soul to die except by God's permission, a recorded term of life. He who desireth the reward of this world We will give him thereof; and he who desireth the reward of the next life We will give him thereof! And We will certainly reward the thankful.

145. How many a prophet hath fought (having) by his side myriads of (godly) men (*Ribbiyun*)! and they lost not heart at what befel them on the path of God, nor did they weaken, nor did they humble themselves. And God loveth those who endure with steadfastness.

146. And their saying was no other than that they said: "Our Lord! forgive us our sins and our transgressions in this our affair; and set our feet firm; and help us against the unbelieving people."

147. And God gave them the reward of this world, and the better reward of the Hereafter. For God loveth the doers of what is excellent.

Verse 143. This verse was revealed about those who having fled and heard of the Prophet being killed began to say, "Mohammed being now slain, go back to your people" (Tabari). Some Musalmans said, "Would that we could get a messenger to go to Abdullah 'bn Obay (the hypocrite leader) so that he may take for us amnesty from Abu Sufyan" (Tarikhe Khamis). Omar too and his men having fled to the hill threw away their weapons, clearly caring nothing if they were seen and pursued by the infidels. Anas 'bn Nazr, the uncle of Anas 'bn Malik, having come up and seen them, a whole party of Muhajirs and Ansars, in this condition and asked about their sitting idle in this way, they simply replied, "The Prophet of God is killed." "Then" said Anas "what do you care for to live. Stand up and die on what the Prophet died for." Saying this he came down, thrust himself among the infidels and fought till he was killed. The Sahabas remained unmoved (Ibn Hisham, Tarikhe Khamis). Shibli explains that this was due to the height of despondency that had seized them at the time.

The Ahmadi Commentator has unnecessarily referred to a memorable but unpleasant incident in which this verse was recited. When the Prophet died Abubecker was away. Fearing that in the meantime the Caliphate of Our Lord Ali might be announced Omar pretended to have gone mad. Drawing his sword he patrolled up and down saying that the Prophet of God was only in a trance and if any would say that he died he would strike off his head. This continued till Abubecker came and brought him and his friends to their senses by reciting this verse. After this leaving the dead body of the Prophet unwashed and unburied they went away to settle the question of Caliphate among themselves.

The Ahmadi Commentator's object by referring to this incident is (in his words) this : " This verse affords conclusive proof that Jesus Christ was also dead, otherwise Abubecker's arguments could not have silenced the doubters of the Holy Prophet's death." As if those who believe that Our Lord was taken alive to Heaven believe that he passed away in the quaint manner conceived by Omar, and do not believe that he is subject to death.

Verses 145. With whom fought myriads (*Ribbiyun*), as Moses, Joshua and others. I do not find a single commentator who has not given this meaning to the word *Ribbi* and it is strange that the Ahmadi Commentator denies this. It may of course be that the word might have been purposely selected here ; being so allied in sound to *Rabbani* it might get a flavour of that meaning in it. Those who go to holy wars *should* be to some extent holy and pious people. But that is only a matter of suggestion.

Verses 146 & 147. This is the character of people who are required for or can be given credit for in Jehads. See 9:112, 113 referred to by Our Lord Ali' bn Husain in answer to a question why he did not join the so-called Jehads of the day. Fighting is by itself no quality implying moral or spiritual elevation.

SECTION 16.

Dread will be cast into the hearts of the opponents. Delinquency of a part of Muslim troops after victory. The enemy took advantage of the disorder. Tranquility after the loss and the murmurings of a certain class. Delinquents pardoned.

148. O ye who believe! if ye obey the infidels they will cause you to turn on your heels and ye will turn back losers.

149. Nay ! God is your guardian and He is the best of the helpers.

150. We will cast a dread into the hearts of the infidels because they have joined gods with God without warrant sent down ; their abode shall be the fire ; and how vile the abode of the evil-doers !

151. Already had God made good to you His promise, when ye were cutting them down by His permission, till when ye blenched and disputed about the order, and disobeyed, after that the Prophet had brought you within view of that for which ye longed. Of you some desire for this world, and some for the next. Then He turned you away from them so as to make trial of you (in future) ; and He hath already forgiven you, for indulgent is God to the faithful.

152. When ye came up the height and took no heed of anyone, while the Prophet was calling you from the rear ! God hath rewarded you with anguish upon anguish, that ye might (learn) not to grieve at what you lose, or at what befell you ; and God is aware of what ye do.

153. Then after the anguish God sent down security upon you—Slumber falling upon a part of you : while the other part whom their own souls had rendered anxious having unjust misgivings about God with the thoughts of ignorance ! They were saying, “Is there anything for us in the affairs ?” Say : Verily the affair rests wholly with God. They hid in their minds what they would not speak out to thee, saying, “Had we had anything in this affair, none of us had been slain at this place.” Say : Had ye remained in your homes they who were decreed to be slain would have gone forth to the places where they lie—and that God might make trial of what was in your breasts, and

might discover what was in your hearts, for God knoweth the very secrets of the breasts.

154. Of a truth those of you who turned back on the day when the hosts met, it was Satan made them slip on account of some of their earnings in actions (*Bibaa'ze ma kasabu*). But now hath God pardoned them; For God is Forgiving, Forbearing.

148. Said to be revealed when the Jews of Bani Qaniquaa tried to set up quarrels between the Aus and Khazraj, the two tribes of Ansars. See note on V. 10 above.

Verse 150. Notwithstanding the great preponderance of their numbers, the Muslims being less than one-fourth of their opponents, and not so well equipped as their foes, and in spite of the disorder into which the Muslim forces had fallen, the enemy had to flee leaving the Muslims in the field, not even making a show of attacking Medina which was quite defenceless. This clearly shows that they were terror-stricken even after they had inflicted some loss upon the Muslims, considering it safer to retreat to Mecca while the Muslims were yet occupied with their own troubles and were unable to pursue them. Never indeed was terror sent down by God more obvious than on this occasion, and all within two or three years of the Prophet's coming to Medina. Can it be accounted for anyway except as a special providence from God?

Verse 151. The promise is contained in verse 123 above. Naturally everything was conditional on the Musalmans remaining steadfast to their duty. Obvious as it is it was distinctly stated in the next verse 124. When in flagrant opposition to the Prophet's orders the people deserted their positions and fell to plunder what could they expect but discomfiture?

Verse 152. 'Did not wait for anyone,' Caliph Omar relates that as he with the others ran off precipitately Our Lord Ali rushed after them trying to call them back but no one would (Qummi). Then he returned to the fight as the attack of the enemy was directed to the Prophet.

'And the Apostle was calling you from your rear' but no one would hear.

'So He gave you calamity after calamity' (*Ghamman be ghammin.*) be being used in the sense of *ala*. Some render it 'grief in place of (previous) grief' and try to distinguish the two, as for instance, *first* that of losing booty,

second that of discomfiture, or *first* that of vanquishment, *second* that of finding the Prophet in a dangerous condition. The latter which is preferred by the Ahmadi Commentator is more edifying and was certainly true in the case of many of the Sahabas who had fled. The import of the passage would then be in Ahmadi Commentator's words 'So they did not grieve for losing an opportunity of pursuing the enemy, but for the dangerous position in which they saw the Prophet.' But the thing is, the Ahmadi Commentator would have nothing of the flight of the Sahabas, and all his notes are artfully contrived to conceal this unpleasant feature of the event. He is nothing if he does not deny the plainest facts known to every child. He says 'What happened was really this : *Seeing the Muslims pursuing them in disorder, and finding the archers' position vocated, a party of the enemy directed a severe attack against the Holy Prophet to cover the retreat of the rest, and when the Muslims became aware of the danger and rallied round the Prophet, the enemy retreated secure from pursuit*' (Italics mine).

Verse 153. Those who had sense enough to see that what happened was but natural, no matter whether it was their own weakness or that of others that was responsible, had their faith unshattered and quietly lay down on their beds when they knew that the enemy had departed and they were secure from danger. There were others, however, who must have had victory if the Prophet was a true Apostle of God—whatever they or their comrades might do. This mentality of the people did not change till long afterwards. When the Prophet signed the Treaty with infidels at Hudaibiyyah (year 6 A.H.) the terms of which were not very favourable to the Musalmans, Omar and a number of Sahabas began to have serious doubts about the Prophet's Apostleship. '*Have we anything in the affair*' i. e. Is success and triumph destined for the Musalmans ?

'*God knoweth well what is in the hearts.*' This happy verse-ending explains admirably what is meant by God's testing what is in the hearts said immediately before. He knows it and His testing it means making it manifest to others. The same applies to expressions like God's not knowing yet and the like which occurs sometimes as in V. 139 above.

Verse 154. The impurity of their hearts due to their past misdeeds, the chief one being long ages of idolatory, led to Satan getting access to their hearts and leading them to delinquency.

'*God hath pardoned them.*' It is right that God having pardoned them, we also should show a spirit of charitableness towards them. The constant jeers and sneers at these things which fill Shia writings and their poetry, is rightly offensive to the Sunnis. We may not indulge in reviling

them even though, as we know, they did the same thing over and over again. Being freshly converted to Islam, after long ages of idolatry and in the darkest ages of ignorance, the little they showed of faith was sufficient, even a wonder, for them. And who knows but that we might prove worse if put in similar circumstances. So not merely for reasons of policy but also in strict justice, the Prophet had to be tolerant towards these men of feeble faith. It really required ages to bring them to full faith. All this is very true, but then these people should not have set themselves, and should not continue to be set up by people, as leaders of religion, and allowed to do so much mischief to block the way of guidance. If they had kept to their places no one would have said a word.

It has to be understood that though in this grossly material age flight for the sake of life may be considered a very ordinary human weakness, and quite natural even for the mass of mankind who may be cowards by nature, yet Islam takes a very serious view of it. Thus in 8 : 15, 16 God says, 'O ye who believe ! when you meet the infidels marching for war, turn not your backs to them. And whoever shall turn his back to them on that day—unless he turn aside for the sake of fighting, or withdraw to a company—then he, indeed, has made himself deserving of God's wrath, and his abode is Hell, and an evil destination it shall be.' And the reason is this "Verily God has purchased from the faithful their lives and their properties for that they shall have Heaven" (9 : 112). A man who knows that he has already sold off a thing to another and it is only kept with him by way of deposit, will not care to—will indeed be very glad to return it to his purchaser when demanded. The man who is reluctant shows that he has not sold his life at all to his God and—what does it come to ?—he is not of the faithful at all. So steadfastness in *Jihad* is made as essential criterion for faith in 2 : 177. See note on that verse. That being so the mere fact of being pardoned does not remove the moral taint. It remains what it was till truly purged off.

The notes of the Ahmadi Commentator on these very clear verses should be an instruction to those who wonder why the Quran is of such a miscellaneous character. But for the Quran the history of the Prophet and of early Islam and much of its teachings would have been recounted to us in a quite different manner.

SECTION 17.

Death in fighting in the cause of God is no evil. The Prophet may still continue to take counsel from his people. The hypocrites separated. The glory of the martyrs.

155. O ye who believe! be not like the infidels who said of their brethren when they journeyed in the lands or went forth to war! Had they kept with us they would not have died and had not been slain—in order that God may make this a regret in their hearts, and it is God who maketh alive and causeth to die; and God beholdeth your actions.

156. And if ye shall be slain or die on the path of God, then pardon from God and mercy is better than all that they amass.

157. For if ye die or be slain, verily unto God shall ye be gathered.

158. Thus it is of the mercy of God that thou art lenient towards them. Hadst thou been severe and hard-hearted, they would surely had dispersed away from around thee. Therefore, forgive them and pray for their pardon, and take their counsel in the affair, and when thou art resolved, then put thou thy trust in God, for God loveth those who trust in Him.

159. If God help you, none shall overcome you; but if He abandon you, who is he that shall help you after Him? In God, then, let the faithful trust.

160. And it is not for the Prophet to hide away anything. Whosoever shall hide anything, shall come forth with what he hath hidden on the day of the resurrection: then shall every soul be paid what it hath earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.

161. Shall he who followeth the pleasure of God be as he who hath brought on himself wrath from God, and whose abode shall be Hell? and how vile the journey thither!

162. They have diverse ranks with God; and God beholdeth what they do.

163. God was indeed gracious to the faithful, when He raised up among them an apostle out of their own people, to rehearse unto them His signs, and to purify them, and to teach them the Book and of the Wisdom: though before this they were in manifest error.

164. What! when a reverse hath befallen you, and ye had already inflicted twice as much (on the foe) before ye (begin to) say: Whence is this? Say; It is from yourselves. Surely God hath power over all things

165. And that which befel you on the day when the armies met, was certainly by will of God, and that He might know the believers,

166. And that He might know those who dissembled! And it was said to them, Come, fight on the path of God, or drive back (the foe)—they said, Had we known how to fight, we would have followed you.” Nearer were some of them on that day to unbelief than to faith. They said with their lips what was not in the hearts! But God best knows what they conceal.

167. Who said of their brethren while themselves sat at home. “Had they obeyed us, they had not been slain.” Say: Keep back death from yourselves if ye speak truth.

168. And by no means think those who are slain on path of God to be dead. Nay, alive they are with their Lord, provided with sustenance.

169. Rejoicing in what God of His bounty hath vouchsafed them, filled with joy for those who follow after them, but have not yet overtaken them, that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve.

170. They rejoice at the favour of God, and at His bounty : and that God suffereth not the reward of the faithful to perish.

Verse 155. 'By "their brethren" are meant their relatives who had accepted Islam, and who were not therefore now safe when they travelled in the land, or who had to lay down their lives in defence of their faith. Yet ultimately they themselves had to regret not having accepted Islam. A clear prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islam. The infidels include also the hypocrites.

Verses 156 & 157. Mark the simplicity and brevity of the promises for future reward held out to the Musalmans if they die fighting for the cause of Islam. Contrast it with the glowing descriptions of Heaven and Hell in the early Meccan Surahs. This indicates the advancement in the moral tone the few years of preaching had produced. For them it was now sufficient to look forward to their being gathered together before their Lord and receive of His pardon and mercy. What that pardon and mercy consists in appears from the next verse. It is no other than pardon and mercy on the part of the Holy Prophet—forgetting their failings and receiving them back to his favour—things impossible to the Immutable God in the gross human sense of the words. It is through His prophets and Imams that God expresses His will in forms which His own undivided unchangeable essence is incapable of manifesting by itself.

158. It was of the Infinite mercy of God that the Prophet was so gentle to the delinquents of Ohad. It was His will that expressed itself through the heart of the Prophet. The same cannot be said of the mercy shown by others, it may be against the will of God—as mercy shown by a judge to the criminal before him.

And if thou hadst been rough, hard-hearted they would have dispersed from around thee. The people certainly deserved other treatment, but owing to the mercy of God, which does not want to leave the sinner till all has been done for him, the Prophet was made lean-hearted towards them ; else the people would not have cared to stay around him and the whole scheme of guidance and salvation of mankind would have come to an end. The verse is important as showing that the general kind behaviour of the Prophet to the Sahabas in spite of their most vicious conduct, as in the case of Khalid and others, his words of encouragement to them and the like, cannot be regarded as due to any real spiritual worth about them, but they were sought to be reclaimed as best they could. Whether they were reclaimed

in the long run is another matter which history alone can decide and of which this offers no guarantee whatever. So the persons who fled from the field on this occasion were pardoned, but those who fled again and again from battle-fields do certainly come under the menace of 8 : 16.

'And consult him in the affair.' The Prophet, Blessed be his name, had never any need to consult or take advice from anybody in any matter. But he had to train them for work in times and conditions when he be no more. So he used to ask the people to advise him in difficulties, seeking to encourage them to exert their brains, and would even condescend to take their advice against his own opinion. In the present case (of the battle of Ohad) his own opinion was that he should not go out of his town to meet the enemy but that they should defend themselves from their homes. In that case even the women and children would be helpful throwing stones from the tops of the houses. This was also the opinion of a number of Sahabas. But the majority were for meeting the infidels in the open plain. They should have yielded of themselves to the superior intelligence of the Prophet, but the faith of the people of those days was of a very elementary character. In short the Prophet decided to go out as the majority thought best though he was perceptibly displeased.

Verse 160. In the booty collected in the battle of Beder a waistcloth of some value happened to be missing. The hypocritical Musalmans began to insinuate that the Prophet might have stolen it. This verse is said to have been originally revealed on this occasion. It is put in here as it was particularly appropriate to this occasion. The disaster at Ohad was due to the fact that the archers stationed at the pass thought that if they were to remain there they would be deprived of their share of booty. They are told that an ordinary commander might possibly be guilty of such unfaithfulness towards his men, but certainly not a prophet. Persons who have such a low estimation for a prophet are virtually Munafiqs, however true and sincere their Islam may be in its own way. The high moral conception of a prophet which we now possess was a thing of very slow growth in early Islam.

Verse 161. 'He who tenaciously follows the pleasure of God' is the one who "sold his life seeking the pleasure of God" (2 : 207), remained fighting to the end, heedless of his life. 'He who has made himself deserving of displeasure from God' are those who fled from the battle-field. See 8 : 16 and verse 154 note.

Both classes of men being mentioned in the singular it is probable that the chiefest of them are *specially* meant in this verse. Hence as the

Shia traditions say 'He who tenaciously follows the pleasure of God' refers to Our Lord Ali. Also there could be little purpose in calling attention to a most obvious thing unless that most obvious thing was liable to be forgotten and some of those who had made themselves deserving of the wrath of God were to be set up as equals of, nay even superior to him who stickingly followed the pleasure of God. That all who fled or all who remained steadfast were not necessarily equal is made clear in the next verse.

Verse 162. There are varying degrees of faith, and so many who showed weakness in the battle-field are not necessarily to be condemned in an absolute way. They are to be condemned if their other deeds also make them deserving of condemnation.

Verse 163. For the description of the Prophet's functions the words are the same as in 2:129 and 2:151. See notes on these verses. The point in the verse is that people who assisted the Prophet and suffered so much risk and hardship in his cause should not consider themselves as putting the Prophet in any sort of obligation by this. On the contrary it is God who lays obligation on the people by guiding them to faith and virtue through His Holy Prophet. That there were people who did really think they were laying an obligation on the Prophet by their embracing Islam. See 49:17.

Verse 164. 'Twice as much.' The unbelievers had already suffered twice at the hands of the Muslims, once in the field of Beder and again in the early stages of the battle of Ohad.

That among the raw converts there were many whose faith began to waver after the disaster at Ohad is simply undeniable. Their faith was little better than that of the followers of Our Lord Moses whose doubtings and reversions to unbelief, whenever anything untoward happened or any difficult situation came up, is well-known. They may even be compared to the French warriors fighting under Joan D, Arc. But to set up these passages triumphantly, as Muir, Sell &c have done, to discredit all accounts of the faithful attachment of the Musalmans to the Prophet that we read of in histories on this occasion is a clear exaggeration. There is not the slightest indication of the affairs of the Prophet getting in the least complicated, which should have been the case if any considerable section of the people had come seriously to doubt in his Divine mission at this early age.

'Say this is from yourselves.' This is explained as referring to the warning given at the time of the victory at Beder in which people were given a choice between killing the captives taken and taking ransom for them. The latter was allowed with the express warning that in the next year an equal number of themselves would be slain. This is not at all necessary. That the disaster was due to their own delinquency and love of booty, and above all their loss of faith leading to flight was obvious. But the last words do seem to show that that might really be referred to here. The Prophet had warned them, but they did not heed his warning, did not take it seriously and perhaps did not believe it fully. Now God has power over all things *i.e.* to carry out His threat and punish the Musalmans for their loss of faith. In fact if it had been thoroughly brought home to the infidels that in the event of defeat they could not expect any clemency from the Musalmans they would have thought twice before making another attack upon them. Moreover the main leaders and the most competent warriors would all have been slain.

Verse 165. 'That God may know' *i.e.* He might make them clearly distinct to all. See note on verse 139 above. The true believers were those who maintained their faith in spite of the apparent defeat which led the others to have misgivings about the Prophet.

Verse 166. 'If they could not realise what was meant by fighting in Allah's way they could easily see that they stood in need of defending themselves. In fact, the alternative phrase is introduced to explain the necessity of fighting to such as were unable to grasp the real significance of fighting in Allah's way, or in the cause of truth, for self-defence required the community to fight for its life.' The implication is that they should fight the infidels to save them from the necessity of becoming renegades from Islam, for if they were prepared for that there was nothing to fear for and defend themselves against. This and also the words 'they were nearer to unbelief than belief' show that the verse speaks not specially of the pure hypocrites who were simply making a pretence of Islam, but of the wider class of lukewarm Musalmans, who though believing had not implicit faith in all that the Prophet said, were not prepared to thrust aside their personal views, based on appearances, in deference to the promises held out to them by the Prophet. They said they would certainly have followed the Musalmans if they knew that was to be a fight in any sense of the word. To their mind the Muslims were going, not to fight, but to sure destruction with such a feeble equipment and such a disparity in members.

Verses 167. These men might have been of the party of Abdullah' bn Ubay on the tribal system, but they were more or less of Muslims in the loose sense of the word. Otherwise they could not have been called their brethren. The Prophet's position was not so strong at this early age that vast numbers of people should merely pretend Islam for fear of their life. There were but few, if any, of these mere dissemblers.

Verses 168—170. These verses are the clearest expression of personal, individual immortality on the part of those who die for the sake of God. They are alive, provided with sustenance, as in life, to keep them alive. They are delighted to receive the favours that God bestows upon them and are glad to observe their brethren in faith in this life knowing that they too are destined to similar favours from God. The verses are so clear and unequivocal that the Ahmadi Commentator has discreetly omitted to write any note on them. Only in the margin of his translation he has referred to his notes on 2: 154 which he has contrived to explain away metaphorically. See our note on that verse in Vol. I.

So far as personal immortality is concerned the case of martyrs and other holy men is not distinct from personal survival after death for all—the only thing that is claimed about them is that they are alive in a more real sense than the rest of mankind; and are in a more real sense provided with sustenance to keep them alive and active. They are also gifted with a waking consciousness and know what goes on in the world behind them. Anyone who knows anything of Spiritualism, or even of Psychical research if he is over-sceptical, knows that there is simply overflowing evidence of man's survival after death—in some form of which we have no conception. The greatest scientists, Sir Oliver Lodge and others, have become fully convinced of it and have advocated it in many of their writings. The literature on the subject is simply vast and one cannot fail to be impressed. Those who withhold their belief are either those who do not care to enquire or those who prefer to wait hoping that some day some explanation may be found which may prove adequate to account for the facts. This would suffice to show at least that, far from being a mere dogma or superstitious belief, it is a fact which in the present state of knowledge has the greatest weight of authority and evidence in its favour. The souls of the departed somehow exist, and can communicate and be communicated with by us, and can establish their identity beyond all reasonable doubt. I have often recommended and again beg to recommend Sir Oliver Lodge's *Survival of Man* and other works to those who wish to be convinced. So I would beg to recommend some of the writings of those committed to the opposite school also as Frank Podmore—a perusal of these

will convince anyone that they are simply (to use Podmore's own words) trying to stretch their theories to the breaking point. Nothing of course has to be said to those who do not take the trouble to enquire and simply poohpooh the facts, or to those who seek to explain everything by Devil's agency—the good Christian critics of Spiritualism. According to Islam, the souls of all, Muslim or non-Muslim, live an individual personal existence in some way in this world till the time of Resurrection. This state is called *Alame Barzakh*, and in it they are happy or in distress according to their morals, virtues or vices, irrespective of their religion. They may also be allowed to visit their homes and are pleased or grieved on account of their relatives. All this is expressly taught in the traditions of the Imams. And this state of life is referred to in 11 : 109, 110. If telepathy from the living is possible (which no one doubts now, being based on extensive experiments) this same must also be possible from the souls of the departed in *Barzakh* life. All this spiritualistic evidence showing real communication with the dead is therefore a confirmation of the teachings of the Imams on the subject. It goes right against Judaism and Christianity, according to which the state of souls after death is one of death-like sleep, and against Hinduism who would have it that they incarnate other bodies, human or animal. One thing requires to be noted. The communication need not be conscious, as in the case of telepathic apparitions from the living it is not always the case that the person whose apparition is seen is really thinking of him who has his apparition. The communication may really come from his unconscious or subliminal self. Another thing to note is that in the *Alame Barzakh* thoughts and feelings are not changed from those of this life, though they may change later with better experience there. So a Hindu is likely to have Hindu thoughts, a Christian his Christian ideas. The subject is dealt with at length in my *Science and Islamic Tradition*.

After this positive evidence the problem that confronts us is how we are to conceive these disembodied spirits. To conceive of pure spirits is impossible. To locate them anywhere it is necessary that they should have bodies of some sort. Also without bodies there would be nothing to limit their activities to this or that. It is the eyes that limit a man's sight to this thing or that, without them he would either be all-seeing or seeing nothing. Without some limiting organism the spirits would be infinite, and personality would have no meaning for them. If so these spirits of departed men must have bodies of some sort, and the traditions of the Imams also teach the same thing. Have we any clue to the stuff these bodies are made of?—a clue that connects them with their bodies in this earthly life. It must be acknowledged that we have very little scientific

evidence, but, such as it is, it is not wholly wanting. I refer to Reichenbach's *Odic* lights, lights seen by special sensitives round bodies of men and then found again round their graves. Reichenbach, it must be remembered was no visionary, he was a scientist of no little fame and many scientific discoveries are due to him. On death the gross material body dies all right but these odic flames do not appear to become extinct with it, on the contrary they appear to remain attached to them and appear for sometime about their graves. They can therefore act as vehicles for the disembodied souls.

So much for the souls of the departed in general. It is easy to see how much more would be the case with those of holy saints and martyrs. Supposing that like other mortals they are given a body composed of this ethereal, odic stuff, they are given sustenance suited to this body whereby they continue their existence and do not *practically* die away in the course of time like the other mortals for want of it. Further they are alive in the fullest sense of living. They do not live a mere inactive existence, but are always actively engaged in the service of God and are free to help those who seek their help or whom God orders them to help, taking if necessary gross material forms for this purpose. So we approach to them for help much as we would any of our living friends and patrons and are seldom disappointed.

This is the common stage to which we believe the greater number of our holy men and martyrs have access. The higher stage is that in which the gross material bodies also are not allowed to rot away, but are continuously nourished presumably through the quasi-spiritual odic agency which, attached only for sometime to bodies after death in the case of ordinary mortals, gets to have a permanent connection with them in the case of these most holy men. Evidence of this can only be found when by some chance the graves of some of these holy men are dug open—a thing strictly prohibited in law. There have been some instances of this in the past and the truth was most remarkably confirmed. Fortunately as this is printing we get news, which all the world knows or can know, of the disintering of the bodies of the holy Sahabas Jabir 'bn Abdullah Ansari and Huzaifa Yamani. The Tigris having diverted its course it was feared that the tombs of these holy Sahabas would be washed away. So the Iraq government ordered the graves to be dug open and the remains to be removed to the shrine of Salman-i-Farsi, another holy companion of the Prophet. The bodies of both were found quite intact after this lapse of about thirteen hundred years. The shrouds were still on, only they were worn out, (Hamdam, Sarfaraz &c. April 1932). Of

old instances I cannot refrain from mentioning the digging open of the grave of the holy divine Sharif Murtuza which is recorded by the Sunni author of *Shaqaeq-i-Nomania* published with Ibne Kallikan's *Biographies* in Egypt. It is said to have been done deliberately to test this belief of the Shias. Similarly some hair-splitting divines having made Shah Ismael Safawi, King of Persia sceptical about the fate of the holy martyr Hur who first opposed Our Lord Husain, but repenting afterwards came over and fought on his side the Emperor ordered his grave to be dug open. What to say of his body, even the handkerchief that Our Lord had tied to his head was found intact there and the King having removed it blood began to come out and would not stop till the same cloth was tied up to it (Anisul Khatir)

It must be remembered that all who are killed in the so-called *Jihads* are not martyrs, not even all those who are killed in true *Jihads*—with the Prophet and the Imams. The Prophet cursed a man who fought valiantly on his side and his motives became apparent from his own confession at the time of death. So too it is not necessary to be actually killed in *Jihad* or otherwise on account of faith to attain to the dignity of a martyr in the cause of God. According to a celebrated tradition of the Prophet, received by many Sunni writers, all who die while they are attached in love to the Prophet's family (*Ahle Bait*) die martyrs. But, alas, there are infinite degrees of love and few attain to even the lowest of them.

SECTION 18.

The believers sally forth against fearless of odds. Unbelievers shall not be able to inflict injury and the respite will add to their ruin. The believers to be separated from hypocrites.

171. (As for) those who after the reverse befell them responded to God and the Apostle—such of them as do good works and fear God, shall have a great reward.

172. Those who, when men said to them. Verily have the people mustered strong against you; therefore fear them! it only increased their faith, and they said, "God is sufficient for us and most excellent is the Protector."

173. They returned, therefore, with the favour from God and (His) grace. No evil touched them; and they followed what was well pleasing to God, And God is of mighty grace.

174. It was nothing but that Satan was instilling the fear of his adherents. Fear them not, but fear Me if ye are believers.

175. Let not those who run in haste after infidelity grieve thee. Verily not one whit shall they injure God! God desireth not to provide for them any share in the life to come and for them there is a great torment.

176. They truly who purchase infidelity at the price of their faith, shall not injure God one whit and a grievous chastisement shall be their lot.

177. Let not the infidels deem that the respite we give them is good for them! We only give respite that they may increase their sins! and for them there shall be a shameful punishment.

178. It is not for God to leave the faithful in the state in which you are, until He hath sifted the evil from the good. Nor is God minded to lay open the secret things to you, but God chooseth whom He will of His apostles (to know them). Believe, then, in God and His apostle; and if ye believe and fear God, a great reward awaiteth you.

179. And let not those who are niggard of what God hath vouchsafed them in His bounty think that this will be good for them—Nay, it will be bad for them—That of which they have been niggardly shall be made to cleave to their necks on the resurrection day; and God's is the heritage of the heavens and the earth, and God is aware of what ye do.

Verses 171. Abu Sufyan and his men having retreated from Ohad and gone about 8 miles off to Hamraul Asad, they began to repent of their hasty retreat, not having effected anything material, neither any captives taken nor plunder effected. The news of this reaching the Prophet, he ordered a march to be made against them insisting that none but those wounded at the battle of Ohad should go with him. But fear seized the Meccans and they fled on hearing of this. It is said that many Musalmans were unable to move without leaning on others owing to wounds that had been inflicted. According to a Sunni tradition from Aye-

sha her father said he was allowed to go in this battle, which, if true, would show that before his flight he got some wounds at the battle of Ohad, which is contrary to the general belief.

Verse 172. This with the following two verses, however, the commentators say, refers to a quite different campaign, though no doubt in the same connection. When retreating Abu Sufyan had proclaimed that he would return for attack next year at Beder and the challenge had been accepted. At the appointed time the Prophet went out with his followers to meet the Meccans but they did not appear. They had only sent a man to frighten the Musalmans with a report of a big Meccan army coming shortly, but Musalmans remained undaunted and spent the time in trading to considerable profit. From a quotation from Ayyashi's commentary I find that in his reading the verse began with *alam tara ila* 'Hast thou not seen or marked' which would separate it from the previous verse. The words 'God is sufficient for us' &c were said by Our Lord Ali repeated of course by his party of true believers.

Verse 178. 'Chooses His apostle' *i. e.* for knowledge of the unseen. Suddi says this verse was revealed on an occasion when the Prophet saying that he knew all true believers from unbelievers to the day of judgement the hypocrites ridiculed at this, being sure that he did not know their hypocrisy. Hearing of this the Prophet was enraged and ascending the pulpit addressed the people in a visibly excited tone in the course of which he said that they could not ask him about anything that is to be till the day of judgement but that he could tell them. On this a man of unknown birth asked the name of his father which the Prophet told him. Then Omar rose up (evidently much perturbed) and said "O Prophet of God! we agree to Allah being our God, Islam to be our religion, Quran to be our guide and thee to be our Prophet. Then forgive us, God forgive thee." The Prophet then came down from the pulpit saying "Will ye then desist?" And then this verse was revealed. This is the Sunni version of the story as given in Siraj *in loco*.

SECTION 19.

Jewish carpings at the Prophet's calling for subscriptions. Their refusal to accept any prophet who did not follow the Mosaic Law. Muslims will have to suffer loss of life and property and also to bear with abusive language. Command to keep the book intact and its violation.

180. Already hath God heard the saying of those who said: "Aye, God is poor and we are rich." We will surely

write down their sayings, and their unjust slaughter of the prophets; and We will say, Taste ye the torment of the burning.

181. This, for what your hands have sent before you; and because God is not unjust in the least to His servants!

182. To those who say: Verily, God hath enjoined us that we are not to credit an apostle until he present us a sacrifice which fire out of Heaven shall devour, Say: Already have apostles before me come to you with miracles, and with that of which ye speak. Wherefore slew ye them? Tell me, if ye are men of truth.

183. And if they treat thee as a liar, then verily apostles have been treated as liars before thee, though they came with clear proofs, and with Scriptures, and with the light-giving Book.

184. Every soul shall taste of death and ye shall only receive your recompenses in full on the day of resurrection. And whoso is hurried away from the fire, and is taken into Paradise, has gained his object. And the life of this world is but a cheating fruition.

185. Ye shall assuredly be tried in your possessions and in yourselves. And many hurtful things shall ye assuredly hear from those who were given the Book before you and from those who join other gods with God. But if ye be steadfast, and fear God, then verily that is matter of (high) resolve.

186. And when God took the pledge of those to whom the Scriptures had been given: Ye shall surely make it known to mankind and not hide it, they cast it behind their backs, and sold it for a sorry price! How vile then is that which they have purchased.

187. Suppose not that they who rejoice in what they have brought on, and love to be praised for what they have

not done—suppose not they shall escape the punishment. An afflictive torment doth await them.

188. And God's is the Kingdom of the Heavens and the Earth, and God hath power over all things.

Versé 180. It is related that the Prophet writing to the Jews of the tribe of Baniqanika to invite them to Islam and exhorting them among other things in the words of the Quran (2: 256) to lend unto God a goodly loan, Phineas son of Azura on hearing that expression said, 'Surely God is poor, since they ask to borrow for Him.' Whereupon Abubecker, who was the bearer of that letter, struck him on the face, and told him that if it had not been for the truce between them, he would have struck off his head: and on Phineas' complaining of Abubecker's ill usage to the Prophet, this passage was revealed (Beizawi). This is the mildest form of the story. Others would have us to understand that Abubecker was sent to negotiate a loan from the Jews on usury (God forbid!) There may be some nucleus of truth in this story, but it is rather strange to me that Phineas who had himself irritated the man should come complaining of him to the Prophet. However that may be, a casual remark made by one man, however sarcastic it might be, cannot have been made into a charge against a whole people. Surely the habit of ridiculing and making sarcastic remarks about the Musalmans and their doctrines was common with the Jews of the time. It is possible Abubecker got into a scuffle with one of them on the occasion stated, he was a man prone to show his zeal in the most inopportune times, creating trouble for himself and the Musalmans.

Needless to say the charge is not made as a view held really by the Jews any more than it was their view that prophets should be slain. It was simply their ridicule and perverse constructions they put on Islamic teachings that was objected to.

Versé 182. The Jews, say the commentators, insisted that it was a peculiar proof of the mission of all the prophets sent to them, that they could, by their prayers, bring down fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice, and therefore they expected Mohammed to do the like. And some Mohammedan doctors agree that God appointed this miracle as the test of all their prophets except only Jesus and Mohammed (Jalaluddin); though others say any other miracle was a proof fully as sufficient as the bringing down fire from heaven (Al Beizawi). The Arabian Jews seem to have drawn a general consequence from some particular instances of this miracle in the Old Testament (Lev. IX 24;

1 Chron XX1 : 26 ; 2 Chron V11 : 1 ; 1 Kings XV111 : 38). And the Jews at this day say that the fire which fell from heaven on the altar of the Tabernacle (Levit 1X : 24) after the consecration of Aaron and his sons and afterwards that which descended on the altar of Solomon's temple, at the dedication of that Structure (2 Chron V11 : 1) was fed and constantly maintained there by the priest, both day and night, without being suffered once to go out, till it was extinguished, as some think, in the reign of Manasses (Talmud, Zehachim C 6), but according to the more received opinion, when the temple was destroyed by the Chaldeans. Several Christians (Prideaux's Comment, part, book iii, p 158) have given credit to this assertion of the Jews, with what reason I shall not here inquire ; and the Jews in consequence of this notion, might probably expect that a prophet who came to restore God's true religion, should rekindle for them this heavenly fire, which they have not been favoured with since the Babylonish captivity.—Sale's note.

It is well to understand that manifestations of God and His special miracles are liable to vary with the character of the people and the character of the impression that is most necessary to produce on them. The hardened Israelites required a sort of terror of the Almighty to start with and for them Fire was a proper form of God's manifestation and as such it appeared to Moses. The descent of fire to consume sacrifices offered was only agreeable to this. In Islam, on the other hand, the leading idea of God is that of the Beneficent, the Merciful, and so in all accounts where a manifestation of God is spoken of allegorically He is represented as Light (*nur*), never as Fire. Even in the Parable of God as Light in Surah 24 : 35 it is distinctly stated that the glow is *without fire*. Fire is always associated with His wrath and punishment. So the bringing down of destructive fire on sacrifices devoutly offered, which are held to be monuments of God (Shaaerullah) in 22 : 37. would be the oddest thing possible, inconsistent with very spirit of Islam. Clearly people have no right to insist which miracle they would have and which not ; as evidence of the Prophet's claims any miracles should do.

The Ahmadi Commentator who has a horror for miracles says this referred only to the burnt offerings of Mosaic law (See Lev 1 : 9 &c) and the demand was tantamount to persistence that the promised prophet should be an Israelite, and should revive the Israelite law. But the language of the Quran tells decisively that it was the miracle that was insisted upon. Though the prophets known to have been slain by the Jews as Zacharias and John the Baptist are not *known* to have shown the miracle on any occasion, yet that is no proof that they did not, and also

being prophets they were believed to be able to do so and that was sufficient for the charge. Moreover they at least disbelieved in Solomon's being a prophet though fire came down from heaven at his consecration of the Temple.

Verse 183. The clear arguments are miracles; *Zubur* is Scriptures given to some prophets; the illuminating book is said to be the Law of Moses but it may be the spiritual Book of Divine Illumination as in 2: 7. See note thereon. In 47: 25 it is said to have come with *every* prophet.

Verse 184. This is the understanding on which belief is required. Any one who grumbles at his misery in this life or anything that happens to him here is not of the faithful. His reward is certain, but will be meted out to him in the hereafter alone, not here. But how few there are among men who fully realize this and abide by it. To the mass of people this is but poor consolation. They are like the Jews whose Scriptures—as they have then—are almost silent about the hereafter and so they have but a loose conception of it.

Verse 185. 'This was never so true as at present. During the past century Muslims have constantly been turned out of their homes, and Muslim States have been swept out of existence and hundreds of thousands of Muslims have been killed for no other offence than that they were Muslims. And the abusive language of the Christian political as well as missionary press and of their imitators in the Hindu press, has outstripped all limits.'

Verse 186. The secret, esoteric teaching of the Jews is well-known. They openly taught that there was much of religious lore which ought not to be taught to the people at large, were averse even to put it on paper lest it should pass into the hands of the people. This enabled them to conceal the prophecies about the Holy Prophet—at least the clear expositions of them transmitted by tradition from the prophets. The verse is meant to warn the Musalmans as much as the Jews—indeed much more for them and they should guard particularly against it. But the practice of hiding, expunging from books, and denying (where the former is not possible) trusting that some may give credit to them is a frequent complaint in sectarian controversy.

Verse 187. All sorts of foolish explanations are given of words chiefly of who 'wish to be praised for what they have not done' seeking to thrust this verse on the Jews or hypocrites. The verse clearly speaks of low-minded folk who having done some small service or sacrifice in the

cause of religion become immensely elated with it and harp upon it to the people, and also do not miss any opportunity of getting credit for something which, as in the case of the wars of the Prophet, though really effected by others happened to be one in which they had taken purely a nominal part. However, it may be said that the meanness here spoken of is not so serious as to have occasioned this threatening revelation unless it was deliberately sought by such impositions to do something of real mischief to the world and to Islam as everyone knows was notoriously the case.

Verse 188. God's being the kingdom of Heaven and Earth none would have the right to it even if they fought and strove honestly for it, much less would those who simply wished to be praised for the attempt.

SECTION 20.

Duty of devotion to God. Prayer of the faithful and its acceptance. But they must remain firm always ready to meet trouble.

189. Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men of understanding.

190. Those who remember God standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heaven and the earth. O our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain. No. Glory be to Thee! Keep us, then, from the torment of the fire.

191. O our Lord! surely whomsoever Thou consignest to the fire, Thou dost surely bring him to shame, and the wrong-doers have none to help them.

192. O our Lord! we have indeed heard the voice of a crier cry (calling) us to faith—Believe ye on your Lord—and we have believed. O our Lord! forgive us then our sins and hide away from us our evil deeds, and make us die (*Tawaffana*) with the righteous.

193. O our Lord ! and give us what Thou hast promised us by Thine apostles, and put us not to shame on the day of resurrection Verily Thou breakest not Thy promise.

194. And their Lord did respond to them : I will not suffer the work of any of you that worketh, man or woman to be lost. One of you is from the other. They therefore who have fled their country and quitted their homes and suffered in My cause, and have fought and were killed, I will blot out their sins from them, and I will bring them into gardens beneath which streams do flow. A recompense from God ! and God ! with Him is the best of recompense !

195. Let not the going about in the land of those who believe not deceive thee.

196. A brief enjoyment ! Then shall Hell be their abode ; and how vile the resting-palace.

197. But as to those who fear their Lord—for them are the gardens 'neath which the rivers flow ; therein shall they abide for ever. Such their reception with God—and that which is with God is best for the righteous.

198. And Among the people of the Book are those who believe in God, and in what He hath sent down to you, and in what He hath sent down to them, humbling themselves before God. They barter not the signs of God for a mean price. These ! their recompense awaiteth them with their Lord, ay ! God is swift in reckoning.

199. O ye who believed ! be patient, and vie in patience, and be firm, and fear God, that haply ye may prosper.

Verse 190. Mark the literary device to show the high position these men have in the sight of God ; their words are absorbed as it were in the Revelation. There is no such word as they say &c. See Introduction Chap. V. Sec. 2. Mark their character. They remain wholly

engrossed in the thought of God every moment of their lives. Even when they think of other things as in the ordinary activities of daily life they reflect on the wondrous design and handiwork of their Creator.

Verse 191. Mark it is the "disgrace," the disgrace of being foiled in the hopes they entertain from the All-Merciful that pains them most at the thought of Hell. In one of the prayers of Our Lord Ali (the Duae Kumail) Our Lord says "Let me grant O Lord that I have patience over Thy punishment but how will I have patience over Thy separation. I grant I may bear up the heat of thy fire, how will I bear being cut off from the sight of Thy grace "

Verse 192. *Tawaffana* is literally 'take over souls' If it means 'make us die' the meaning is 'make us die the death of or in the moral state of the righteous.' The original meaning needs nothing to explain and is to be preferred.

Verse 198. *Ahlul Kitab* 'People of the Book.' This word is here used in the old sense in distinction to the Ummi Arabs who had no revealed Scriptures before the Quran; else technically the Musalmans are also *Ahle Kitab*.

The commentators usually name the well-known Jewish converts, as Abdullah, bin Salam &c as praised of in this verse. But without definite authority we can only hope so about particular individuals. The verse may rather refer to some obscure converts, whose devotion prevented them from coming into the limelight of history, such for instance as Addas who suffered persecution on the part of the Prophet. It is also unfair to restrict the praise to the Jewish and Christian converts of the Prophet's day. The tense in the original is *Muzare* (Aorist) and applies as much to the future and the past. Indeed some of the future converts may deserve the praise much more than any in the Prophet's day and *may* as such *be specially referred* to in this revelation. Such for instance were Wabb 'bn Abdullah Kalbi with his mother and wife who shortly after conversion suffered martyrdom with Our Lord Husain at Karbala.

SURAH IV.

AL-NISA (WOMEN.)

Revealed at Medina ; 177 verses.

SECTION 1.

Respect for ties of relationship. Property of orphans not to be wasted. Dealing equitably with orphans comparable to that in the case of polygamous marriages. Guardianship of orphans. Inheritance to devolve on males as well as females. Distant but poor relatives to be treated charitably. Warning against embezzlement of the property of orphans,

In the name of God, the Merciful God, the Merciful.

1. O men; fear your Lord, who hath created you from a single being (*nafs*, soul), and from it created its pair, and from these twain hath spread abroad (so) many men and women. And fear ye God, in whose name ye importune one another,—and (take heed of) kinship. Verily God is watching over you !

2. And give to the orphans their property ; substitute not worthless things (of your own) for the good ones, and devour not their property (adding) it to your own ; for verily that is a great crime.

3. And if ye are apprehensive that ye shall not deal fairly with orphans—then, of such women as seem good in your eyes, marry by twos, or threes, or fours, and if ye fear that ye shall not act equitably, then one only or (the slaves) whom your right hands have acquired : that is nigher keeping you from transgressing.

4. Give women their dowry freely ; but if of themselves they give up aught thereof to you, then enjoy it (may it be) pleasant and wholesome (to you).

5. And make not over to the light-witted the substance which God hath placed with you for your support ; but maintain them therewith, and clothe them, and speak to them with kindly speech.

6. And make trial of orphans until they reach (the age of) marriage ; and if ye perceive in them a sound judgment, then hand over their substance to them ; but consume it not wastefully, or hastily fearing they are growing up. And he who is rich, let him abstain, and he who is poor let him use it (eat of it) according to reason. And when ye make over their substance to them, then take witnesses in their presence ; and God is enough as a reckoner.

7. Men shall have a part of what their parents and kindred leave and women shall have part of what their parents and kindred leave whether it be little or much, an allotted portion.

8. And when they who are of kin are present at the division, and the orphans and the poor, give them (something) out of it ; and speak to them with kindly speech.

9. And let them beware (to wrong the orphans) who, should they leave behind them weakly offspring, would be solicitous on their account. Let them, therefore, fear God, and let them speak the right word.

10. Verily they who swallow the substance of the orphans wrongfully, swallow down only fire into their bellies, and anon shall they enter the burning fire (of hell).

Verse 1. ' From one soul,' *i. e.* From Adam. Irrespective of all that has been said about the Evolution theory in the Supplement (Surah 2 : 29), where it is shown to wholly untenable, the likelihood of all human beings coming from a single progenitor is clear from there being no varieties in human race having any marked physiological differences. Even Huxley is prepared to admit this.

'And created from it (soul) its mate.' The expression can be interpreted to mean simply *min jinsiha*, that is, of its kind, as the Ahmadi Commentator strives in his note to do, but surely the meaning that comes first to the mind is what the unsophisticated commentators of old did understand—that it had reference to the old belief that Eve was created from a rib of Adam. This must be acknowledged whether as a fact this is right or wrong. The story originated in Genesis 2: 21, 22 and is taken in Islam in several traditions, though it must be said that none of them are very reliable.

As the story is it may be considered either as purely allegorical, or as having some truth, however figuratively expressed. Taking it as allegorical there is no difficulty about it on the evolution hypothesis. The differentiation of sexes is a late evolutionary development. Ultimately all come from ancestral forms, which were both male or female or neither, and from them their mates were afterwards developed. As saying something about Adam in particular it is part of the story of his creation and stands and falls with it. The evolution theory no doubt tends to discredit it, but whether it itself stands on a sure ground—that is the question. And even if it were it could only mislead about *matters of fact* in which, to say nothing of a miracle, there was any conscious designing activity on the part of intelligent beings. The creation of simple forms of life from non-living matter has been effected long ago (by Dr. Bastian and others) and as I write I learn that the manufacture so to speak of higher forms of life is also considered a serious possibility by one scientist, at least, of eminence, Mr. Martin (Akaiion basis of the Daily Herald). If the experiment is ever successful and these grow and multiply, evolutionists who happen not to have heard of it will no doubt call it all evolution.

'Ask of each other.' Not beggary which cannot be reciprocal but rightful claims and dues which get a glow of sanctity when demanded in the name of God, that is on the ground of the duty we owe to Him.

Verses 2. The care of the orphan was one of the very first injunctions which Islam laid down and the Holy Prophet always showed a deep anxiety for the welfare of the poor and the orphans. In Surah 90: 15, 16 it is called the uphill path.

Yet such verses as this one warning people against cruelty and injustice to them are never amiss in the common society in the present day even, what to speak of the degraded society of the Prophet's day. It is said that misappropriation of an orphan's property on the part a man of the tribe of Bani Ghatfan led to the revelation of this verse. Though

the man eventually gave it back to the orphan the Prophet said that the sin remained. The grave warning had a rather serious effect on the people and some decided to have nothing to do at all with the orphans. This led to the revelation of 2:220. But for this that the evil was either a very prevalent one or it was feared (rightly as history shows) that the evil may become a permanent one in Muslim society a revelation was hardly called on so obvious a thing. The Musalmans should take due note of this.

The 'evil' *Khabis* substituted for the 'good' (*tayyeb*) is the better property of the orphan substituted for the worse in quality held by the guardian. The addition to is the mixing up so that the property of each may not be distinguishable.

Verse 3. This is one of the most puzzling verses in the Quran—the first part of it, I mean. There are various explanations given. One is that if they are so much afraid about injustice to orphans they should be equally afraid of injustice in their dealings with their several wives and so though four are permitted they should restrict themselves to one if they fear they will not be able to deal strictly equitably with them all. Another explanation is that if they feared that in marrying orphans under their care they may not do strict justice to them (as, for instance, they may give lesser dowry than they might get elsewhere) they had better not marry them, but marry other women up to four taking care to deal equitably with them, if they marry more than one. Other explanations differing only slightly from the above are summarised in Sale's note on the verse. The second explanation given above is derived from the Prophet's wife Ayesha, held in much esteem by the Sunnis but deprecated by the Shias. This explanation, as the Ahmadi Commentator notes requires the insertion into the passage of a number of words which the original does not contain. But his own explanation is worse than any ever imagined. Assuming (what he says 'is admitted') "that this chapter was revealed to guide the Muslims under the conditions which followed the battle of Ohad" when owing to numbers of men killed there were a number of widows and orphans to care for, he says "in this verse we are told that if they could not do justice to the orphans, they might marry the widows *whose children would thus become their own children*" (*italics mine*), thus suggesting that in this way their property would be easily absorbed and there would be no question of injustice to them! And he adds, "and as the number of women was now much greater than the number of men they were permitted to marry even two or three or four women. It would thus be clear that the permission to have more than one wife was given

under the peculiar circumstances of Muslim society " (italics mine) ;—and that is what he is driving at, afraid of the constant objections of Christians to the polygamy of Islam. We need not discuss it.

Conscientiously I must say that I am very much afraid that something is left out after " If ye fear that ye cannot act equitably towards orphans ; " and for this reason I have inserted a dash after this portion. Strictly it should have been a blank. And it is said there is a tradition of Our Lord Ali to this effect in *Ihtijaj Tabrasi* but I have not seen it. If that is not so I incline to the first explanation I have given.

The proviso " and if ye fear that ye will not do justice (between them, (the wives) then (marry) only one " deserves the attention of all Musalmans especially when read with verse 129 the first part of which says ' And you have not in your power to do justice between wives.' True, the latter part of the verse makes concessions, and there are traditions specifying in what things strict equity must be shown ; still the spirit remains the same and the ideal must be striven to be followed. It is satisfactory that in India monogamy is the rule and polygamy is the exception.

Not a word need be said in defence of the polygamy as it is legalised here. There are all sorts of men and women, and all sorts of conditions in life. A Divine law which is meant for *all* men must give the utmost latitude so as to make provision for all. Only look round yourselves and see how many are cases in which, but for domestic troubles due to false ideals and traditions, polygamy is a real necessity and the diffidence in that respect a real trouble. And none are so devoid of imagination as not to conceive of a hundred others.

Hughes in his Dictionary of Islam calls it a "utilitarian argument" against polygamy that the number of men and women is almost equal and so this shows that nature intends us for monogamy. To this it is sufficient to say that, for all that, in countries where polygamy exists it goes on without any trouble ; all men cannot possibly have means to be polygamous, only some can. He also forgets what Cowen and others say that commonly in society, as it is, to every hundred marriageable women there is hardly one marriageable man. Sexual maturity is not the only thing that has to be considered in marriage. The world would heave a sigh of relief if those who for any reason (poverty being only one of them) are not able or do not seriously mean to take all proper care of their children ceased to think of multiplying. Europe with all its

monogamy and a world of birth control is multiplying better than India, or Persia or Arabia, the only reason being that the vast majority of fathers here are not fit to be fathers at all. Many will say that this is against the spirit of Islam which is very solicitous about marriage, but due reflection will clear them on this point. See also 24: 32, 33 which clearly speak of substance as requisite for marriage, and also general fitness.

As I have said it is only false ideals and traditions that create domestic troubles in polygamy and so oblige men to limit themselves to one wife, however troublesome that may be. The woman when she is married thinks that she should be master of all her husband has or may ever have and naturally resents any intruder to share her privileges with her. So she cannot be equally fair and loving to children of the other wife. Both most despicable evils, the former directly antagonistic to the Muslim idea of marriage and the ideal of the society that Islam wants to create.

The limitation of marriages to four at a time is based on obvious reasons. The biological reason is that supposing all of them to be fertile, and to become pregnant by turns one of them would generally be able to live with her husband, the other three being far advanced in pregnancy to do so.

The case of slave girls is exceptional. Two things have to be considered in relation to them. (1) Only the higher class, more opulent persons will have opportunity to possess them. (2) They are ordinarily drawn from the lowest levels of society whence their morals are also ordinarily low.

To keep them as concubines is (1) to prevent them from immorality (see note on verse 28 below). Indeed experience shows that to keep them in this way is the only way to keep them at all (2) to give them a lift in society by joining them in a true family tie, to say nothing of love, to their masters. It was this intimate relation that, history has shown, has raised slaves and slave-girls to the foremost ranks in every Muslim court. This result has not been very desirable from every point of view, but it speaks for itself so far as their personal elevation is concerned. Slavery in Islam is quite different from what it is among other people. With us it is no less than a method to extend the family and absorb others in it, only without giving them certain special rights as of inheritance which the law allows to family.

Verse 4. According to a Sunni tradition Our Lord Ali attached a sort of holiness to the money which a wife might, out of loving kindness

to her husband, remit to him of her pleasure. It may be efficacious for cure of diseases. This shows what value Islam attaches to a happy conjugal life.

Verse 5. Kindness and charity must never be denied to any, but in the case of gifts exceeding those required for necessities of life discrimination must be used to see that those who are given are able to make good use of your money.

It is, however, said that here "*by your property*" is meant the property of the orphans which is under *your* control as guardians. The verse thus lays down the principle of the Court of Wards. It requires guardianship in the case of all who are weak of understanding, whether minors or others."

SECTION 2.

Case of children and of parents with or without children. Share of husband or wife with or without children and share of sisters and brothers. Punishment for breaking the law.

11. God enjoineth you about your children! the male shall have the equal of the portion of two females and if they be females more than two, then they shall have two-thirds of that which (their father) hath left; but if she be an only daughter, she shall have the half; and the father and mother of the deceased shall each of them have a sixth part of what he hath left, if he have a child, but if he have no child, and his parents be his heirs, then his mother shall have third; and if he have brethren, his mother shall have the sixth, after paying the bequests he shall have bequeathed, and his debts. As to your father or your children, ye know not which of them is the most advantageous to you. This is the apportionment assigned by God. Yerily, God is Knowing, Wise!

12. Half of what your wives leave shall be your's, if they have no issue; but if they have issue, then a fourth of what they have shall be your's, after paying the bequests

they shall bequeath, and debts. And they shall have a fourth part of what ye leave, if ye have no issue, but if ye have issue, then they shall have an eighth part of what ye leave, after paying the bequests ye shall bequeath, and debts. If a man or woman make a distant relation (*Kalalah*) their heir, and he or she have a brother or a sister, each of these two shall have a sixth; but if there are more than this, then shall they be sharers in a third, after payment of the bequests he shall have bequeathed, and debts. Without loss to anyone. This is the ordinance of God, and God is Knowing, Mild.

13. These are the bounds set by God; and whoso obeyeth God and His Prophet, him shall God bring into gardens beneath whose shades the rivers flow, therein to abide for ever; and that is a great achievement.

14. And whoso shall disobey God and His Apostle, and shall break His bounds, him shall God place in the fire to abide therein for ever and for him shall be a shameful torment.

N.B.—For the shares in inheritance see any Law-book. The essentials of the Shia Law will be summarised in the Supplement. •

SECTION 3.

Punishment of women and men guilty of immoral conduct. Repentance. Women to be treated kindly and not as mere chattels.

15. And as to such of your women who may be guilty of whoredom, then bring four witnesses against them from among yourselves; and if they bear witness to the facts, shut them up within their houses till death takes them on, or God makes out some way for them.

16. And if a couple among you commit this then chastise them both; then if they repent and amend then

leave them alone ; for God is the Oft-turning (to mercy), the Merciful!

17. With God the repentance is only of those who have done evil ignorantly, and then turn shortly after unto Him. These! God will turn unto them ; for God is Knowing, Wise!

18. And repentance is not for those who do evil, until when death is close to one of them, he saith, Now surely am I turned to God ; nor for those who die unbelievers. These! We have made ready for them a grievous torment!

19. O believers! it is not allowed you to be heirs of women (*tarisul nisua* or take women as heritage) against their will ; and do not shut them up in order to take from them part of the dowry you had given them, unless they have been guilty of manifest indecency, but associate kindly with them, for if ye hate them, haply ye are hating a thing in which God hath placed abundant good.

20. And if ye be desirous to change one wife for another, and have given one of them a talent, make no deduction from it. Would ye take it by slandering her and with manifest wrong?

21. And how could ye take it, when one of you hath gone in unto the other, and they have received from you a binding covenant.

22. And marry not women whom your fathers have married. Except what has already passed : for this is a shame, and hateful, and an evil way.

Verses 15. This verse was revealed to correct a practice prevalent among the early Arabs. They would confine their women in their houses—for life—whenever they found them guilty of adultery. The verse says that they may do so, but they should not do it on their own allegations

unless their guilt is witnessed to by four men. Failing this they can divorce their wives if they please, but can take no further action against them.

• 'Or God opens some way for them.' This refers to the setting up of Islamic government with tribunals of justice according to law. There the cases will be investigated with all the rigour and precaution of a judicial enquiry, and if there is the slightest room for doubt the woman will be acquitted and there is no further way against them. And note that where these are established the injunction in this verse cannot be acted upon. It may be acted upon whereas in non-Muslim countries the Islamic law cannot be administered and there are no courts competent. In short if the case is not tried judicially all that the man can do, if he likes to punish his wife, is what is contained in this direction. And in the course of her confinement it may be that her ways may be so mended that the husband may be inclined to take her back to himself—that would then be a way opened by God for them. The world-famous Arabic scholar Palmer sees in this verse a proof that "women taken in adultery or fornication were at the beginning of Islam literally immured" Can there be a more glaring instance of an able man getting blinded by religious prejudice?

Verse 16. This is for fornication under similar conditions, where the case cannot for any reason be tried by a truly competent Judge under Islamic law. They can only be slightly punished. *Azuhuma*, put them to pain or worry.

Verse 17. This verse is to be carefully borne in the mind. True repentance is only in case of occasional slipping into sin through ignorance and soon followed by contrition and repentance. Forgiveness of sins is quite another thing. God may forgive—and, it is hoped, will forgive generally, even if there has been no repentance on the part of the sinner at anytime whatever. The repentance that is here spoken of is that which is attended by the "returning of God" to mercy for the individual which must be attended with His grace to mend for the future.

Verse 18. Those who postpone their repentance to the hour of death cannot be said to repent at all, for there is no time left for attempt to do better. They can only seek forgiveness, and it may be granted to them.

Verse 19. Among pre-Islamic Arabs when a man died his elder son or other relations had a right to possess his widow or widows, marrying

them themselves if they pleased without setting a dowry upon them, or marrying them to others or prohibiting them from marriage altogether. Sometimes they restrained women from marrying so that they might become heirs to the property which they possessed, for in the case of marriage the new husband would become the heir. •

‘And do not shut them up in order to take from them part of the dowry you had given them, unless they have been guilty of manifest indecency.’ This remedies another evil prevalent in those times. Those husbands who were dissatisfied with their wives were wont to give them trouble in order that they should be forced to claim a divorce and remit the dowry. This is disallowed. So commentators generally understand the manifest indecency (*fahishatin mubayyenanatan*) spoken of in this verse to be not necessarily indecent conduct, but may extend to hatred and desertion of the husband, refractoriness, or being harmful to the husband and his family (Ilazi).

Verse 20. It is said that when a man had the desire to marry another wife in place of the first, he used to accuse the latter of adultery or other gross immorality, thus compelling her to obtain a divorce by paying a large sum of money. This is reprimanded here.

Verse 22. This disgraceful practice obtained in some low families in the form of inheriting father’s women as his property (verse 19 above). “Except what has already passed.” This should not be held to mean that marriages of this kind contracted before this prohibition were allowed to continue. There were no such marriages ever made by the Musalmans though it is possible that owing to the promiscuous incest in the days of ignorance some may have married women who had lain sometimes with their parents or other elders. What it means is that Musalmans who were the outcome of such parents or ancestors in the days of ignorance should not be considered illegitimate, or looked down with contempt as having a base ancestry. Thus Caliph Omar’s parents were men of this sort of birth. (*Maarif*, Ibn Qutaiba &c.)

SECTION 4.

Blood and foster relations whom it is not lawful to marry. Other free women. When slave girls can be taken in marriage.

23 Forbidden to you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your aunts, both on the father and mother’s side, and your nieces on the brother and

sister's side, and your foster-mothers, and your foster-sisters, and the mothers of your wives, and your step-daughters who are your wards. born on your wives to whom ye have gone in ; (but if ye have not gone unto them, it shall be no sin in you to marry them ;) and the wives of your sons who proceed out of your loins and ye may not have two sisters ; except what hath already happened. Verily, God is Forgiving, Merciful !

PART V.

24. (Forbidden to you) also are married women, except those who are in your hands as slaves. This is the law of God for you. And it is allowed you, besides this, to seek out wives by means of your wealth, with modest conduct, and without fornication. And such of them as ye have sought to profit by for a term appointed (*Mastamtaatum bihi*) do Mutaa with then pay up their dowries as a matter of duty. But it shall be no crime in you to make agreements over and above the stipulated amount. Verily God is Knowing, Wise !

25. And whoever of you has not means enough to marry free-believing women, then (let him marry) such of your believing maidens as have fallen into your hands as slaves ; God well knoweth your faith. Ye are the one from the other. Marry them, then, with the leave of their masters, and give them a fair dower : (but let them be) chaste and free from fornication, and not entertainers of lovers. Then if after marriage they commit adultery, then inflict upon them half the penalty for the free married women. This is for him among you who is afraid of falling into sin, but if ye have patience, it will be better for you. And God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Verse 23. These marriages are forbidden according to all, only that the Hanifis say that a man having entered on any such marriage will not be punished with the legal punishment (*Hadd*) of adultery, but will be simply chastised.

Verse 24. Muhsinat (women of virtue) is the word commonly used for married women, and that is the meaning here, as distinct from that in verse 25 below where it means free women. The meaning is that like the relations prohibited in the preceding verse all married women are forbidden to be taken in marriage. The exception, those whom your right hands possess, refers to women taken prisoners in wars. When they were converted they could not go back to their husbands, even though they were not formally divorced.

Famastam'aatum bihi minhunna. Then those of them ye engage in *Mutaa* with. *Mutaa* is an inferior form of marriage in which the man stipulates to keep the women as his wife for a stated period only, after which the marriage is dissolved of itself. The parties do not inherit each other. This is in force among the Shias; and among the Sunnis it is allowed by Malikis, others hold it to be unlawful, largely on account of Caliph Omar's prohibition. Following these latter in ordinary translations the words are rendered thus "those ye seek to profit by" following the etymological meaning of the word *Mutaa* or its verbal form *Istemttaa*, which is quite misleading. That here the words refer to *Mutaa* and not to marriage in general appears from this that according to the Sunnis themselves Ibn Abbas read the verse as follows. "Then those of them ye seek to profit by (or do *Mutaa* with) for a specified time (*ila ajalin musamma*) then pay them up &c" (Kashshaf, Durre Mansur &c). This also appears from the use of the word *Ujrahunna* (lit their remunerations, hires, wages &c) for dowries for which the word is *Mahr* or *Sadaq*; the word *ajr* which has lower associations is never used.

That *Mutaa* was in force in the days of the Prophet though practised only in cases of special necessity is clear from the Sunni traditions which make the Prophet responsible for *twice* allowing this practice, the permission being said to be each time withdrawn after a short time. That this is only *ben travesto* appears from the famous saying of Caliph Omar reported in almost all Sunni works: "Two *Mutaas* were in force in the days of the Prophet: I make both of them unlawful and will punish men for practising these." (Tafsir Kabir &c). The one *Mutaa* is this one of marriage, the other that of Hajj in which Umrah is combined with it—allowed in 2: 192. The prohibition of this latter was not accepted, that of *Mutaa* marriage stands among the Sunnis, and for this purpose the words *ila ajalin musamma* for a specified period, were removed from the text. *Mutaa* marriage continued among Sahabas and Tabein; at all events remained a matter of controversy among the early Musalmans. Even Ibn Omar the son of Caliph Omar sided with these who refused to subscribe to the vali-

dity of Omar's prohibition; he having no authority to make a thing illegal which was pronounced lawful by the Prophet, (Tirmizi). For further evidence the reader is referred to Shia controversial literature where literally hosts of Sunni authorities will be found cited.

Rather than this historical treatment it may be better to consider the question of *Mutaa* marriage from an ethical point of view. That it is an inferior form of marriage is admitted. See the discourse of the divine Hisham on this in Kafi. It is thus not ordinarily desirable unless there exist special reasons and circumstances calling for it and making the normal permanent marriage undesirable. And so the Prophet and the Imams do not seem to have done this. But that such circumstances do arise every one knows. Thousands of persons are obliged to remain for long periods away from home and are forced for various reasons to leave their wives at home. To deny a temporary marriage to them is either to force them to celibacy or to drive them to clandestine practices. The former is always difficult in the case of ordinary people; but even if it is observed it has no ethical value unless the thoughts are kept pure. Religion may preach this, but *Law* has to deal with actual facts of life and must make provision for all possible necessities. Moreover conditions may arise when marriage becomes a necessity for medical reasons—such cases are not infrequent; indeed sometimes cases arise where a permanent marriage is possible, but is extremely undesirable; only a short temporary marriage is possible—and a necessity. Besides all this there are men and women who are in fact incapable of permanent marriage for whom a permanent wedlock is nothing but misery, who cannot manage to keep it; cannot be happy in it. Marriage requires a certain mellowness in temper and temperament which many people are much too destitute of. Practical Engenics suggests other reasons which it would be rather too long to discuss. Anybody can read about them. How, I say, can Law close its eyes to such a glaring mass of necessities and requirements before it. A law which ignores these is simply a victim of false sentimentalism, and Islam begs to be excused of this. It is very well to take of ideal perfection in moral precepts; but when this comes to making laws out of them, nothing but evil can result. What is the result of the high ideal of marriage boasted of in Christianity. I will not make mention of Paris or New York, take the gazetteer of any European or American city or country and read the percentage of illegitimate births there. Of 191 721 births in Belgium in 1904, 12887 or 6.7 % were illegitimate (Ency. Britt. 11th Ed.) and Belgium, it will be allowed, is a fairly decent country as regards morality among Christian countries.

Illegitimate births in Berlin amount to about 15 % of the whole (Ibid). These numbers speak for themselves and surely it is madness to ignore them. Surely all these illicit connections are not due to mere profligacy, many of them are due to dire necessity where permanent marriage has been impossible or undesirable. As to divorce, which is considered as tantamount to causing adultery in Christian religion, anybody can read any day in the newspapers of divorces claimed and granted for the most trivial. Recently a divorcee has been sued for quarrels arising from the husband using wrong grammar or colloquial English. This is the curse that Christianity labours under for abolishing the law and confining religion to moral precepts. Islam does not wish to boast of this. It wants to regulate things for all time, and it cannot do this without seeing to all possible contingencies. The flagrant growth of immorality in Christian countries, despite its grave denunciation from the pulpit, is evidence that not only is the moral teaching imperfect generally, but it is becoming all the more unsuited to the growing civilization. Clearly Islam, if it means to be a final religion for the world, must see to this. Nothing can be more cruel than to marry one day on promise of an all-life union and to cast away the next day on some fantastic reason. If one is not fully resolved for this *at all costs* it is infinitely better for him to marry for short periods, and extend time later if it suits them so that the other party may know of its true position. It wants that persons who are not sure that they will abide by their contract for their whole life should not deceive the other by an unexpected divorcee. It is really meant to put a stop to this nasty practice which is so much growing in this modern civilization.

Needless to say, this presumption of Caliph Omar to prevent, making unlawful, this practice which had been allowed by the Prophet, is a matter which, but for the low conception of Islam in those times, would (as in modern times) have been sufficient to brand him as an infidel (*kafir*). But he had his own way of believing and many others in his day also had *his* way of believing : and so nothing more need be said about it. His excuse, when people complained about it, was that after all it mattered little as any man can put away his wife, a day or so after marrying her—the very thing we have been considering.

Verse 25. Bondwomen could be either those who were taken captives in wars, or women who sold themselves for life-service. In either case they would belong to the lower strata of society, and their morals would accordingly be more depraved than those of free women, who themselves had not a very high tone of morality in Arabia at the day

So these women were allowed to be kept as concubines by their masters so that the houses of good family Musalmans might not threaten to become brothels. But this was not the thing that was really desired. Where possible these women were to be married to the poorer folk among the Musalmans, and it was hoped that with good treatment and education in the houses of their new husbands they would learn better morals. However, looking to their low origin, poverty and deficient education, they were not to be subjected to the same punishment for adultery as free women. They were not to be put to death (by stoning), they could only have thrashing and that too only half of what the free women would get for the same offence. According to a tradition in Qummi after eighth offence in married life they may be executed. That they would not be stoned is clearly implied in the words and is clearly stated by all commentators, and yet Sir John Malcolm in his Sketches of Persia represents this halving of punishment as an insoluble problem for the jurists of Islam.

SECTION 5.

Respect for rights of property and life. Woman has as much right to her earnings as man. Similar rights in case of inheritance.

26. God desireth to explain to you and to guide you into the ways of those before you and to turn (mercifully) unto you, for God is Knowing, Wise.

27. And God desireth (thus) to turn (mercifully) unto you ; but they who follow their own lusts desire that ye should deviate with a great deviation.

28. God desireth to make your burden light : for man hath been created weak.

29. O believers ! devour not each other's substance among yourselves unlawfully ; (by no means) unless there be a trafficking among you by your mutual consent ; and slay not one another ; of a truth God is merciful to you.

30. And whoever shall do this maliciously and wrongfully, We will shortly cast him into the fire ; for this is easy with God.

31. If ye avoid the great sins which ye are forbidden, We will blot out your faults, and We will cause you to enter Paradise with honourable entry.

32. And covet not the gifts by which God hath raised some of you above others. Men have their share from what they have earned, and the women have their share from what they have earned. And ask God for His favour; Verily God hath knowledge of all things.

33. And to every one We have appointed heirs (*Mawali*) (to inherit) out of what (their) parents and near relatives have left behind; and those with whom your right hands have made agreements, give them their portion. Verily God is witness over all things.

Verse 26. 'Ways' (*Sunan*) of those before. That is, the essentials of their religious practices, divested of unnecessary incumbrances, sufficient to keep up the continuity while giving them a more spiritual character and meaning. For God's turnings see next note.

Verse 27. Note the contrast. The turning of God (mercifully) to His creatures means bestowing His grace to enable them to stick to the right path, to be better and nobler, not forgiving them merely.

Verse 28. That is, man cannot bear the burden of too much religious discipline, occupying all his time in scrupulous regard for every minute detail (as was the case in Judaism) and at the same time devote himself to higher work of moral self-purification in the exercise of true moral duties. This burden is therefore reduced. Also Islam does not insist on literal performance of what may be a really good moral ideal in principle, but makes allowance for special conditions and circumstances. Thus Islam does not compel every man in every case to lay up his life to his persecutors for the mere avowal of his beliefs, but allows *Taqiyya* where conditions make it feasible and desirable. Its morality is strictly relative in principle and utilitarian in practice, and never purely ideal. There is no virtue that may not become a vice in certain conditions, and no vice either that special circumstances may not raise into a virtue. This Islam wishes to teach plainly and does not care for strictures it may evoke from those whose sole object is to attract mankind by the deceptive glamour of high ethical ideals.

Verse 29. Note the verse-ending. If we are to be creatures worthy of our God we must try to have something of His character, not disgrace His name by going against it.

Verse 31. Strictly the *Kabair* (plural of *Kabira*) are such great sins as adultery, fornication, bearing false witness &c, but any sin however venial, may become a *Kabira*, if done with the thought that it is after all a trifling matter, to say nothing of a spirit of insistence (*Israr*) which makes it greater than the greatest sins—almost quite unpardonable. See 3:129. Thus practically any sin done *deliberately* and *with full consciousness of the displeasure of God attending it* becomes a *Kabira*, which must be eschewed. In short the sins that are forgiven are those fallen into at the spur of the moment, in a heat of passion, without allowing the mind sufficient time to think of God. With the thought of God coming in the mind *whether as punisher or as pardoner* the sin, whatever it may be, threatens to become a *Kabira*.

Verse 33. *Mawali* is plural of *Maula* which conveys a number of significances such as lord, chief, cousin, freed man, slave, heir. The next words "out of what (their) two parents and near relatives leave" appear to show that it is the last, heir, that is intended here. "Those with whom your right hands have ratified agreements. In pre-Islamic days people were accustomed to enter into covenants, one with another, by which they undertook to defend each other and to inherit one another; and when one of them died, the other was considered entitled to one sixth of the property of the deceased. When the Muslims fled to Medina the Holy Prophet made every Meccan emigrant enter into a close relationship of brotherhood with one of the Medina citizens, so that one of them would become an heir to the other. But this was dispensed with later by revelation of 8.76 and all such obligations removed. The verse says where such obligations have been entered into and are in force they must be observed.

NOTE.—In the first part the translation follows the construction as commonly understood. *Mujahid*, however, takes the words 'parents and near relatives' as in opposition to heirs (*Mawali*) which seems better and clearer.

SECTION 6.

Wife's desertion. Reconciliation how effected. Faithfulness of one's duty to God and duty to men. Niggardliness and hypocrisy condemned.

34. Men stand above women on account of the (qualities with which) God hath favoured the one above the other, and on account of the outlay they make from their substance (for them). Virtuous women are obedient, careful, during (the husband's) absence as God hath of them been careful. And those for whose refractoriness ye have cause to fear; admonish them and remove them unto beds apart, and scourge them: but if they are obedient to you, then seek not occasion against them; verily, God is High, Great!

35. And if ye fear a breach between them, then send a judge (chosen) from his family and a judge (chosen) from her family; if they are desirous of agreement; verily God is Knowing, Aware.

36. And worship God and join not aught with Him in worship, and be good to parents, and to kindred, and to orphans, and to the poor, and to a neighbour, whether kinsman or new-comer, and to a fellow traveller, and to the wayfarer, and to the slaves whom your right hands hold: verily God loveth not the proud, the vain-boaster.

37. Those who are niggardly themselves, and bid others be niggards, and hide away what God of His bounty hath given them. We have made ready a shameful chastisement for the unbelievers.

38. And for those who bestow their substance in alms to be seen of men, and believe not in God and in the last day. And whoever hath Satan for his companion, an evil companion then he is.

39. And what were it to them if they had believed in God and in the last day, and bestowed alms out of what God hath vouchsafed them; for God well knoweth them!

40. God truly will not wrong anyone to the weight of a mote, and if there be any good deed, He will repay it doubly; and from His presence shall He give a great reward.

41. How! when We shall bring forth from every people a witness and when We shall bring thee up as a witness against these?

42. On that day they who were infidels and rebelled against the Prophet shall wish that the earth were levelled with them! But not a single tale shall they hide from God.

34. However hurting it may be to the feelings of some in the present day, in their mutual relations the man is to domineer over his wife and the wife is in some respects placed in subordination to him. This does not mean inferiority any more than a son is necessarily inferior to his father because he has to be respectful and obedient to him, or Sir Jagadish Chander Bose is necessarily inferior to the executive authorities placed over him at Calcutta. There are qualities which make some naturally fitted and some naturally unfitted for certain things; owing to natural differences in the character of minds, temperament, sensibilities, emotions &c, man is more fitted to rule the family (and thereafter the whole world) than the woman. The very functions that nature has assigned to the two create these differences, and who can revolt against nature? It is owing to these natural differences that in the social evolution the husband has come, all the world over, to be the protector and maintainer of his wife, and not the wife of her husband. But this is only relative superiority and limited to mutual relations.

The good wives are stated to be *Qanitat* and *Haftzatun lil ghuib*. The former obviously means here 'obedient to her husband,' but the word used is that of devotion to God, the meaning therefore is 'devoted to her husband out of piety.' The latter 'guarding the unseen as God has guarded' is a "euphemism for guarding the husband's rights" (and) their property &c, because of the protection that God has given them in their husbands.

In the case of disobedience (*nushuz*, rising against her husband) the remedy pointed out is three-fold. First she is only to be admonished. If she desists, the evil is mended, but if she persists in the wrong course her bed is to be separated. If she still persists she may be chastised, and not till all of these methods have proved unavailing is recourse to be had to a judge for separation (as referred to in the next verse) or a divorce is to be effected. 'Do not seek occasion against them.' The Prophet's words must be remembered 'The best of you is he who is best to his wife.'

Verse 35. When a breach occurs which the husband is unable to rectify by himself, recourse may be had to some Qazi whose first duty is to appoint judges on both sides (as from their relations) to effect a reconciliation. If that fails to effect a reconciliation then a separation may be effected, but it will be seen which of the two is disinclined to reunion. Unless both are disinclined when divorce is inevitable, the one who is is to be called enemy of God and compelled to maintain or be refused maintenance as the case may be and will not be entitled to inherit the other while other will be allowed to inherit him or her, if he or she dies earlier. See Our Lord Ali's decision in a case of this sort in Qummi's commentary.

Verse 36. Charity with goodness is in importance only next to belief in God and must be extended to the remotest neighbour, and the wayfarer and all under control. Note the verse-ending which seems to have not much in common with it. Charity must always be done in a spirit of meekness and with a sense of duty to the poor and their having a sort of claim on our wealth. Also miserliness is always attended with a feeling that the poor are despicable and their lives worthless.

Verses 37-39. Miserliness is here held to be something of unbelief, and so is the giving to man to be seen of men. See note to 2 : 264 Vol. I.

Verse 40. Goodness is not only generously rewarded but is multiplied to each man's account.

Verse 41. The prophets and the Imams sent to the various peoples in the world are watchers over their respective people and the Holy Prophet is watcher over these prophets and Imams as their constant companion in his pre-existent state and also after his death. See 2 : 143 and note thereon.

SECTION 7.

Necessity of purification before prayer. Jews exhorted to obey. Gravity of polytheism.

43. O ye who believe! Come not to prayer when ye are intoxicated, until ye know (well) what ye say ; nor when ye are polluted, unless ye be travelling on the road, until ye take a bath ; and if ye be sick, or on a journey, or one of you come from the privy or have touched a woman, and ye

find not water then betake yourself to clean earth, and wipe with it your face and hands with it: verily, God is Pardoning.

44. Hast thou not remarked those to whom a part of the Scriptures hath been given? They buy error (themselves,) and would that ye (too) go astray from the way.

45. But God knoweth your enemies; and God is sufficient for a guardian, and God is sufficient for a helper!

46. Among the Jews are those who change the words from their places and say, 'We have heard, and we have not obeyed, and hear thou, but as one that heareth not; and look at us; (*Raena*) distorting (the word) with their tongues, and scoffing at the Faith, But if they had said, We have heard, and we obey; hear thou and Have regard for Us, (*Unzurua*) it were better for them, and more upright. But God hath cursed them for their unbelief, wherefore it is but few only of them that believe.

47. O ye to whom the Scriptures have been given! believe in what We have sent down confirmatory of the Scripture which is in your hands, ere We efface your features, and turn them towards their backs, or curse you as We cursed the sabbath-breakers; and the command of God was carried into effect.

48. Verily, God will not forgive that anything should be associated with Him! But other than this will He forgive to whom He pleaseth. And he who uniteth others with God hath assuredly invented a sin of grievous calumny.

49. Hast thou not marked those who claim purity for themselves? Nay; it is God who grants purity to whom He will, and they shall not be wronged the husk of a date-stone.

50. Behold how they devise a lie against God! and therein is enough for a manifest wickedness.

Verse 43. There is some difference of opinion as to what is meant by *Sukara* 'intoxicated' here. The majority of commentators take it to mean intoxicated with drink, others explain it as 'intoxicated with sleep' (Qummi). It certainly includes both. The Sunni writers say that this verse was revealed on a debauching party given by Abul Rahman bn Auf. Rising to prayers and reading Surah 109 in it they perverted it to the most blasphemous meaning.

The pollution here referred to is that due to sexual intercourse, Such men should go to mosque even unless it comes in their way as travellers and they cannot avoid it.

Not getting water includes cases where water would be injurious. The *Tayammum* (touching with sand) prescribed in such cases is purely a symbolical practice to serve for prayers till water can be used. The prayers should not be forgone on any account. This is contrary to the opinion of Caliph Omar who insisted that in such cases prayers should be withheld. It is right to say that in this case he is not generally followed by the Sunnis.

Verse 46. 'Alter word from their places' Ibn Abbas says, the Jews coming to the Prophet and hearing from him something (about his teaching) used to distort it when reporting it to others (so as to excite disgust about him among their people)—(Siraj). This may to be the right meaning here, as the other things complained of in the verse also relate to their malevolent, irritating behaviour with the Prophet. This, however, makes the meaning of these words clear when these same words are used in connection with their sacred Scriptures.

'*Raena* distorting with their tongues.' See 2 : 98 and note thereon.

Verse 47. For all that the Ahmadi Commentator and others have done to take the words metaphorically it is difficult to say that the threat was meant to be understood otherwise than in a literal sense. It can be easily seen that this miracle would have brought on that very undesirable state *Kashf-e Ghita* (uplifting of the veil) which would take away the value of faith altogether (see note to 2 : 118, Vol. I). So it could only be deferred to the last days. The most that could be done was some individual cases of divine punishment in this form. Also it is said that some Jews (like Abdullah' bn Salam, and Kaab-ul-Akbar) who, like the many others, were convinced in their heart of hearts of the truth of Islam, but were prevented from open conversion by communal pride or jealousy or religious indolence were afraid when they heard of this

revelation and hastened to make an open avowal of faith. So it was but natural that the All-Merciful should show indulgence to them. Also it happened that among those who believed and in fact were born to this faith there appeared myriads who in their aversion and opposition to the Prophet and his family exceeded anything that the Jews ever did. It was now unjust to be severe to the latter while showing indulgence to the former. Among these were notorious instances of literal turnings of head and change to animal forms. Thus Moulvi Abdul Hai (a Sunni divine, remember) says in his *Raf'ul Sitr* that Caliph Omar 'bn Abdul Aziz found that his predecessors Caliph Abdul Malik and Walid were found to have their heads turned to their backs when they died. In the Introduction p. 29 (Vol. I.) I have referred to a case of metamorphosis recorded by the historian Waqidi.

Verses 48. This is not because polytheism can in any way tell upon the grandeur of the Divine Being, but because it lowers the dignity of human nature. It is such an impossible conception that it cannot be entertained without stultifying Reason, and so making a man inherently incapable of spiritual progress. It means nothing short of stifling Reason, and in any sane person it can hardly be without active voluntary effort to prevent Reason from doing its work. So it happens that when the thoughts of the so-called polytheists are analysed they do not appear to be polytheists in the true sense of the word. Thus the polytheists of Mecca held their gods to be inferior deities, intermediaries between themselves and God (39:4). In every case there will be found either atheism, absence of the thought of a Supreme Being, or else, some form of anthropomorphism, or incarnation theory, or belief in some form of complexity in the Supreme Being as in the case of Christian Trinity, or that of the Arya Hindus, and it is these notions that are denounced as polytheism in the Quran. Equally with the nonsense of polytheism they subsist on voluntary suppression of thought, whether this be due to indolence or its opposite. Atheism can be due to ignorance, polytheism cannot. However, all that the verse means is that the polytheist cannot hope to get to Heaven. To say nothing of the uncovenanted mercies of the Almighty, his virtues may entitle him to entire cessation from torment even if he remains in Hell. I say *even* for Heaven and Hell are not the only places with God, and we have the Imams' authority for saying this (Haqqul Yaqin). See 2: 161 note.

Verses 49. 'Attribute purity to themselves.' Not necessarily before others. Self-satisfaction about this will also be pride. An exception

must be made when, as in the case of prophets, they have to teach about their own sinlessness as an essential article of faith.

Note also that it is owing to ourselves that God does not purify us or hold us pure while He takes some of the others to His favour for this.

SECTION 8.

Jews prefer idolatorers to Muslims. It is Abraham's seed that has been blessed. Recompense of unbelief and faith. Judges and judgement. Obedience to the Apostle and those in command.

51. Hast thou not observed those to whom a part of the scriptures hath been given. They believe in Jibt and Taghut, and say of the infidels: These are better guided in the path than those who hold the faith (of Islam).

52. These are they whom God hath cursed: and for him whom God hath cursed thou shalt by no means find a helper.

53. Shall they have a share in the Kingdom? But then they would not bestow on (their fellow) men even the speck in a date-stone?

54. Envy they other men what God of His bounty hath given them? But indeed We have given to Abraham's children the book and the wisdom and We gave them a grand kingdom.

55. Now some of them believed on him and some turned aside from him:—and sufficient (for such) the burning fire of Hell.

56. Those who disbelieve Our signs We will soon cast into the fire; so oft as their skins shall be well burnt, We will change for them other skins, that they may taste the torment, Verily God is Mighty, Wise!

57. But as for those who have believed, and done what is virtuous, We will make them enter into gardens

'neath which the rivers flow—therein to abide eternally; therein shall they have wives of stainless purity: and We will make them to enter umbrageous shades.

58. Verily, God enjoineth you to give back your trusts to their owners, and when ye judge between men, to judge with justice. Excellent is the practice to which God exhorteth you. Verily God is Hearing and Beholding!

59. O ye who believe! obey God and obey the Apostle and those having the charge of affairs (*Uhl amr*) among you. So if in aught ye differ bring it before God and the Apostle if ye believe in God and in the later day. That were good and the best (way of) returning (to the truth) (*Tuawilan*).

Verse 51. *Jibt* and *Taghut* are said to be the names of two idols of the Quraish at Mecca (Siraj) but this is doubtful. The latter is a common word used in the Quran for devils, idols &c. generally without any precise and definite meaning. *Jibt* is said to mean sorcery or enchantment. The words thus seem to "refer to the general debasement of the Jews who believed in all kinds of enchantment, divination, and sorcery, and had long bidden fare-well to the pure monotheism of Moses."

After the battle of Ohad Kaab' bn Ashraf went with 70 other Jews to make a compact with the Quraish against the Prophet and, to convince them of the Jews' entire sympathy with the cause of the Quraishites, told them that their religion was better than that of the Musalmans, and—it is said—adored their idols also. It is this, say the commentators, that is referred to in this verse.

Verse 53. A Prophecy, it seems, that kingdom is for ever taken away from the Jews.

Verse 54. The Kingdom of Heaven which is "the Grand Kingdom," was still in Abraham's seed but was now transferred from the descendants of Israel to those of Ishmael.

Verse 55. Of them *i. e.* of the children of Abraham among whom the Jews were. These latter, however, turned away from Abraham in rejecting the Prophet who was the true exponent of Abraham's religion.

Verse 56. This verse shows a knowledge of the scientific fact that sensibility is confined to the skin. Deeper down in the flesh and internal

organs there is no sensibility. So only the skins are to be changed or rejuvenated to keep up the torment. This surely bespeaks a degree of physiological knowledge that is something marvellous for a Son of the desert.

Surely clear and precise statements of this kind do not admit of being explained away as a metaphor, and so even the Ahmadi Commentator does not set himself to attempt it. However, in passing it over, he leaves this little note. 'The form used signifies the continuance of the torment (Razi) in accordance with the metaphor of the fire.'

This description of the torment of Hell is certainly horrible, and man naturally recoils from it. And I say man should promptly reject it, if it is not based on *good reliable* authority. If, however, the Revelation is truly from God it is no use shutting one's eyes to it. Now while the torment is admittedly horrible, it must be remembered that it will somehow be bearable. It is possible to give a detailed account of the physiological changes in the organs in diseases like syphilis and leprosy that would cause any man to shudder, yet when it comes on it is somehow borne. Even cases of burning are not rare and they are borne—so long as life lasts. There is a relation between vitality and the amount of pain it can endure and in no case can that amount be exceeded. The only difference in the case of the Hereafter is in the long, may be eternal, continuance of the pain, and that is indeed horrible to think of. But for aught we know with change of nature even that may be bearable.

Verse 57. 'Zullan Zalilan' 'A dense shade' (*zill* shadow) is after all not a thing very much to be coveted. But *zill* is also used for reflection, a thing depending on light. The idea is that it is a state in which all light is due to the spiritual light of the believers themselves and their Prophets and the Imams, as in the case of Hell all the physical torments, fire and the like are only physical counterparts, in fact created by their internal spiritual woes.

Verse 58. In this verse the address is specially to the rulers of men, or those having any sort of authority in which men are concerned. The thing, a great truth that strikes at the root of Sunni religion, has struck even the Ahmadi Commentator. "It not only includes" he says "the payment of the trusts of money to their owners, but also the entrusting of the affairs of government to those who are worthy of handling them properly. The words that follow, requiring judges to be just, corroborate this significance." And the next verse also, we might add, which speaks of the duty of obedience of the people to "those in authority among them." Surely government, rulership over a people, is a great

trust, which must be made over to those who are fit for it. The question is whether, on the popular Sunni view, the Prophet did it. The Shias say that he did it in the most open manner, and with all manner of ceremony, on return from his last pilgrimage at Ghadeere Khum. See notes on verses 1, 4 and 70 of the next Surah. What have the Sunnis to say? Surely, on their view, a man more careless of his great trust than the Prophet cannot possibly be imagined—a man who did not care to say even so much as that after him they might elect some one to rule over them, unsatisfactory in the extreme as that would be. Qummi says that the meaning is that Imams (including the Prophet) should make over their Imamate to those appointed by God after them (and should announce this to the people).

The Sunni commentators say that on revelation of this verse the Prophet made over the keys of Kaaba to the infidel son of Abu Talha to be retained by him and his descendants *for ever* as he had a hereditary right to that honourable office. This fact, if it has any real connection with the verse, is interesting as showing that unless there are very strong reasons to the contrary the hereditary rights of people to rulership are to be respected.

Verse 59. In this verse the word *Ulii amr minkum* 'those in authority from among you' is most hotly discussed between the Shias and Sunnis. The latter say it means either any temporal rulers or commanders, or else the learned divines, the Ulema, and add that obeying them is binding, indeed lawful, only so long as their commands are not opposed to any thing in the word of God or the *Sunnat* of the Prophet, and so it is said later that if there is any dispute the reference must be made to God and the Prophet. There is a difference of opinion as to whether these *Ulii-amr* must be Muslim or it is indifferent whether they are Muslims or not. The Ahmadi Commentator in his note takes the latter view explicitly. We will not discuss this as we reject this interpretation altogether.

Besides making a reservation (which the original does not contain) in the case of *Ulii amr* making their obedience conditional this interpretation makes the Musalmans subject to the most cruel ordinance that rapacious kings and other rulers may subject them to, taking care that they do not openly contradict any express teaching in Quran and Hadis. Anybody can see how easily anything the most cruel and unjust can be ordered within these limits; and yet the Musalmans are to bow unconditionally to them *as a religious duty*. Their obedience is by this verse made as binding as that

of God and His Prophet. The verse practically makes them like God and His Prophet in these temporal matters.

And then what if there is a dispute as to what God and Prophet say in a certain matter? The Muslim books of law are full of these disputes. Instead therefore of saying that in case of dispute refer to God and His Prophet it should have been said that in case of dispute as to what God and His Prophet say reference should be made to the *Ulil amr*.

And finally who are these *Ulil amr* themselves. *Anyone* who comes, *anyway*, to authority, be it so by fire and sword as Moavyah, or be he set up by an irregular mob as Abubecker. All Muslims must obey him. What a fine direction !

According to the Shias the *Ulil amr* are the Twelve Imams after the Prophet, who being infallible can only speak the mind of the Prophet when they make any command of themselves. There can be no disagreement between the two, whether in principle or detail. So it is that while the word 'Obey' is repeated in the case of the Prophet to mark the distinction between the nature of obedience due to God and that due to His Prophet, the latter being not absolute but based on the authority of God, the word is not repeated in the case of *Ulil amr* whose obedience stands on the same footing as that of the Prophet. As to the clause 'so if you dispute about anything then refer the matter to God and the Prophet' the Shias say that the words 'and the *Ulil amr*' were in the Revelation but were expunged. And supposing this was not so it might mean that if there is any dispute about the teachings of the Imams in the traditions, as there sometimes is, that may be cleared by simpler teaching in the Quran and Sunnat. Whichever that may be, God says that would be the best way of getting the right interpretation, *Ahsano taawilan*, the right method in the case of difficulties.

So it is the Twelve Imams only whose obedience the Shias acknowledge to be binding upon them. As to other men in authority whether Muslim or non-Muslim the position is clear. If they have been appointed by the rightful Imam their very appointment is their authority, and we must submit to it. It requires no Quran to tell us that ; but then the Imam would be seeing that they act properly. If these do not derive their title from that rightful source, we may still obey them if they are just, but we are in no sort of religious obligation to them. And in this there is no difference between Muslim and non-Muslim. The king of England and the Shah of Persia are the same to us. Even in case of tyranny we

may remain obedient to avoid Jihad so far as possible, which is forbidden in the absence after Imam.

As to Sunni traditions corroborating the Shia view it is sufficient to cite the tradition of Jabir 'bn Abdullah Ansari who says that on revelation of this verse he asked the Prophet as to who were the *Ulii amr* whose obedience was here joined up to his own obedience. The Prophet replied that they were his successors after him, Ali being the first, his two sons down to the 12th (present) Imam who were all enumerated with their names (Rowzatul Ahbab). Other traditions purport to say that Our Lord was pointed out to the people as one of them. Apparently conformably to his usual practice he gave full details to the choicest of his disciples, the masses who could not bear the very thought of hereditary succession, he was content with naming the one immediately to succeed him. Contrary to Our Lord Ali, the other great Sahabas he frequently placed sometimes under the command of the most despicable raw converts (as Khalid) and sometimes under juveniles (as Osama) to make it clear to all who have eyes that these men are no way fit to be regarded as *Ulii amr*. Their grumblings in the latter case were simply answered with a curse. The necessity of giving these commands in indirect suggestive expressions, instead of plain words we have explained in the Introduction.

Note. The word *Tawil* 'interpretation' used at the end is carefully to be noted. It shows conclusively that the verse is meant to serve as a guide in the case of religious difficulties. The Ahmadi Commentator renders it 'in the end' and adds a short note to justify it etymologically. But all who know the language know that it will not do.

Razi in his great commentary considers five interpretations that have been assigned to the word *Ulii amr*. (1). That they are the *good* (first four) Caliphs (2) that they are the leaders of armies (3) rulers (4) divines (5) The Imams—according to the Shias. Equally with the last he rejects all the others and invents a new one of his own, *Ijmae Ummat* 'consensus of opinion' in the community. This is like the interpretation of 'Paraclete' by the Christians as the spirit which fills the Church. It has been well said in reply that if this were so they should not blame the murderers of Othman. His chief difficulty about taking it as the Imams is that at the present time the Imam is not visibly present among us and there is no access to him. But this is not so. Access to the Imam is always possible, only it is difficult requiring much spiritual preparation, and it is he who sees when it is desirable for him to appear to us. Allama Nuri has in his *Shihabe Saqib* given over a hundred instances of Our Lord's appearance to people, down to the present day.

SECTION 9.

Hypocrites' leaning to devil. The Prophet's judgement must be accepted. Obedience to God and the Prophet shall bring great reward.

60. Hast thou not marked those who profess they believe in what hath been sent down to thee and what hath been sent down before thee? Fain would they be judged before Taghut, though commanded not to believe in him; and fain would Satan make them wander away with wanderings wide (of truth).

61. And when it is said to them, Come (let us refer) to that which God hath sent down, and to the Apostle, thou seest the hypocrites turn away from thee with utter aversion.

62. But how, when some misfortune befalls them, on account of what their hands have sent before. Then will they come to thee, swearing by God, We desired not save (to promote) good and concord! (*Taufiqan*).

63. These are they whose hearts God knoweth. Therefore turn aside from them, and admonish them, and speak to them effectual words concerning themselves.

64. We have not sent any Apostle but to be obeyed by the leave of God, and if they, when they had sinned to their own hurt, were to come to thee and ask pardon of God, and the Apostle (also) ask pardon for them, they would surely have found God to be Oft-turning (to mercy), the Merciful.

65. But No! By the Lord—they will not believe, until they have set thee up to decide in any differences that may arise among them, and thereafter do not find in their hearts any vexation on account of decision and accept it with a perfectly willing acceptance.

66. And if We had prescribed for them, Kill yourselves or abandon your dwellings, but few of them would have done it. But if they had done that to which they were exhorted, better had it been for them, and stronger for the firmness (of their faith).

67. In that case We had surely given them from Ourselves a great recompense.

68. And We should surely have guided them on the right path.

69. And whoever doth obey God and the Apostle, these then are with those unto whom God hath bestowed favour—the prophets, and the truthful, and the martyrs, and the righteous ; and an excellent company are they.

Verse 60. It is agreed that this verse was revealed in connection with a Sahabee who having a dispute with a Jew about something suggested that they may go to Kaab' bn Ashraf for decision, while the Jew wanted him to take it to the Prophet for him to decide in the matter. The Sunni commentators, however, give a different name of this man and saying that he was a Munafiq add that the case being brought before the Prophet and he deciding in favour of the Jew, the man insisted on the matter being brought before Omar who, when he learned that the case had already been decided in favour of the Jew by the Prophet, drew out his sword and struck off the head of the Munafiq, for which act of his Omar was given the title of Farooq (the separator of truth from falsehood). A mere embellishment apparently meant to show that Omar had acquired an incredibly great influence in the days of the Prophet even. This has struck Sale also and so he supposes that the dispute was made again in the days of Omar's Caliphate ; but for this supposition there is no basis whatever.

Verse 61. Mark that besides the Quran the people were invited to the Prophet—to all he taught whether in the Quran or not. It seems much like a truism, but there was a vast body of men then, and they have many supporters now, who think that, except in matters expressly taught as Revelation from God, the Prophet was a mere man as anybody else and there was no obligation to accept all he said. Shibli is the most well-known supporter of this view which he derives directly from the sayings and practice of Caliph Omar.

Verses 62. For their plea of desiring good and concord see note on 2: 11 (Vol 1). All our national troubles are due to our falling away from the Prophet and in the Hereafter, many of the Sahabas will be thrust away from the Prophet's pond for what they had done after the Prophet (Bokhari). See Our Lord Jafarul Sadiq's tradition in Qummi's commentary in *loco*. Some at least surely thought the country could not much longer stand the spiritual government of the Prophet, and a democracy offering full opportunities for all would be best for the people and necessary to keep them united in Islam.

Verses 63. The men are to be admonished merely, not to be fought and killed, for owing to their crass ignorance men having adequate ideas about the spiritual greatness of the Prophet were rare, and violent dealings with these early converts, even if justified, would have ended in complete annihilation of Islam.

Verses 64—68. First the spirit of obedience must be created and then guidance should be thought of, that is true guidance in the true sense of the word (2: 1 note). But how rare was this spirit that it required so much carping upon it even in the divine Revelation! Nay, the reason rather is that there is little of it even to-day, thirteen hundred years after the Prophet. The verses are meant for *our* admonition.

Verses 69. It is the 'those favoured upon by God' whose path we are taught to pray for in Surah 1, which is read in every prayer. *With those* that is spiritually, in spiritual union with.

SECTION 10.

Believers must remain on their guard against the attack of infidels. Those who hold back. The cause of God and the cause of the devil.

71. O ye who believe! Take your precautions, and advance in detachments, or advance in a body.

72. But verily there is of you one who will be sure to lay behind: and if a reverse befall you he saith, Now hath God dealt graciously with me, since I was not with them in the fight.

73. But if grace from God come upon you, He will say, as if there had never been any friendship between you and him, Would I had been with them, so I might have come by a great gain.

74. Let those, then, fight on the path of God who sell this present life for that which is to come; for whoever fighteth on God's path, whether he be slain or conquered, We will in the end give him a great reward.

75. And what hath come to you that ye fight not on the path of God, and for the weak among men, women, and children who say, O our Lord! bring us forth from this city whose inhabitants are oppressors; give us from before Thee a champion and give us from before Thee a defender.

76. They who believe, fight on the path of God, and they who believe not, fight on the path of Taghut: Fight therefore against the friends of Satan. Verily the craft of Satan is weak.

Verse 73. 'As if there were no friendship between you and him.' As far as I can think the meaning is that if they had real friendship with you as they used to pretend they would have rejoiced much about your success, and would have considered it as their own gain. But the words 'O would that &c.' are frequently used by Shias addressing martyrs of Karbala to express their regret for not having been present at the time. They may be sure that if their regret is sincere their love for these holy martyrs will give them a place near them. So it seems to me that what the verse says is that these words, which are only fit to be used for the spiritual bliss of holy men, martyrs &c. and may be fitly used only by men sincerely seeking their position these dissemblers use for worldly gain, which only goes to prove the shallowness of their pretended friendship to you. The words are most inappropriate unless used for true spiritual felicity.

Verse 74. The Prophet did not leave Mecca till nearly all the converts (except some of his own family) had left the city, and these too came over to Medina shortly after. Who, then, are these weak men and children who cry to God against the oppression of the Meccans?

These appear to be the new converts who were made from time to time, were mostly concealing their religion and were crying for a free atmosphere to breathe. It is absurd to suppose that the wholesale conversion of masses that was made at the conquest or rather surrender of Mecca was a thing of one day, and the people were not already getting slowly converted from years before.

However this may be, this verse explains what is meant by fighting in the way of God. It is fighting to deliver such men from the persecution of their oppressors. And that is meant by 2: 193. 'And fight till there be no *Fitnah*,' *Fitnah* being the state in which but for the persecution (actual or feared) of men in power people would willingly be induced to be converted to the true religion. (See note on 2: 193 in Vol. I).

Verse 26. This is a prophecy that those who are siding with the devil and are fighting against the Holy Prophet shall be ultimately vanquished.

SECTION 11.

Hypocrites' refusal to fight. Their secret counsels. They spread false reports. The Prophet exhorted to fight even if alone. Responsibility for joining in a cause or making intercession.

77. Hast thou not marked those to whom it was said: Withhold your hands (awhile from war) and keep up prayer and pay the *Zacat* (poor-rate). But when war was commanded then, lo! a portion of them fear men as with fear of God, or with a yet greater fear, and say, O our Lord why hast Thou ordained fighting for us? Would that Thou hadst us carry awhile to a near end? Say: Small is the fruition of this world; but the next life is the good for him who feareth God! and ye shall not be wronged so much as the skin of a date-stone.

78. Wherever ye be, death will overtake you—although ye be in lofty towers! If good fortune betide them, they say, This is from God; and if evil betide them, they say, This is from thee. Say: All is from God. But what

is the matter with these people that they are not near to understanding what is told them ?

79. Whatever of good betideth thee is from God, and whatever of evil betideth thee is from thyself ; and We have sent thee to mankind as an Apostle : and All-sufficing is God as a witness.

80. Whosoever had obeyed the Apostle, then assuredly he hath obeyed God : and as to those who turn back, We have not sent thee to be their keeper.

81. And they say : (We are in) obedience, but when they come forth from thy presenee, a party take counsel together by night of doing other than what thou hadst said. But God writeth down what they brood over by night therefore separate thyself from them, and put thy trust in God and God is sufficient for a protector !

82. Do they not then ponder over the Quran ? Were it from any other than God, they would surely have found in it much that is inconsistent.

83. And when there comes to them anything, either of security or of alarm, they bruit it abroad ; but if they were to submit it to the Apostle, and to those who are in authority among them, then surely they would have known it who deduce (the command of God in) it. And but for the goodness and mercy of God towards you, ye would have certainly followed Satan except a few !

84. Fight, therefore, on the path of God. Thou art not charged save for thyself ; but urge on the faithful. Belike God will check the might of the infidels, for God is the strongest in prowess, and the strongest to punish.

85. Whosoever intercedeth (*Yash'ao*) for a good intercession shall have a share therein and whosoever inter-

cedeth (*Yushfao*) with an evil intercession shall have some of the burden thereof. And God keepeth watch over everything.

86. And when ye are presented with a present, then present ye with a better on, or return it, surely God taketh count of all things.

87. God! there is no God but He! He will certainly assemble you on the day of resurrection. There is no doubt in it. And whose word is more true than God's?

Verse 77. "This verse affords a clear proof that the injunction to fight was distasteful, and more particularly so to those who were weak in faith. Had there been any hope of plunder to aminate the ranks of Muslims, those who loved this world most (who are here called hypocrites) would have been foremost in fighting, but as they knew that they were against odds, they considered execution of this order as equivalent to courting death and requested to be granted respite they might meet death naturally."

Verse 78. 'If a misfortune befalls them they say, This is from thee.' Just as when afflictions began to come on the Egyptians they attributed them to the unlucky appearances of Moses and his people. See 7 : 131.

Verse 79. "Good and evil or benefits and misfortunes proceed from God, but while He sends benefits from Himself. *i.e.*, out of His beneficence, no evil or misfortune afflicts a man unless his own hands have called for it. There is no discrepancy in the two statements, the one made at the end of the last verse—Say All is from *Allah*—and the other made here. The previous verse states that the hypocrites attributed their misfortunes to the Holy Prophet; they are told that misfortunes were sent by *Allah*. This verse tells them that though sent by *Allah*, yet the immediate cause of these misfortunes was to be found in their own doings." The words are addressed to the people, not the Prophet as may at first sight appear from the singular form used.

Verse 80. Obedience to the Prophet could not in the full sense of the word be the same as obedience to God unless the Prophet were really a manifestation of the Divine Will. "I was a hidden treasure, then I liked that I may be known, so I created thee O Mohammed" (Hadis

Qudsi). But it is not necessary to discuss this most difficult conception in the science of divinity here. See note on 3 : 30.

Verse 81. 'The reference here is to the secret counsels of the hypocrites who were always plotting against the Holy Prophet while they kept an appearance of obedience to him.' Their object first was to overthrow the power of the Prophet, and subsequently, when his dominion was well established, to seize on it and become masters themselves. In this they half succeeded and were content. Nothing is heard of these hypocrites of Medina after the Prophet's death.

Verse 82. In the Introduction we have seen that, both as a literary composition and as regards its matter, the Quran is a miracle bearing witness of its divine origin. These features would constitute a wonder and be accounted a miracle even if the Quran were written out and given to the world on one occasion. How much more should it be wonderful when, as we know, the revelation came in slices at different times through a period of 23 years.

In this verse a new line of argument is suggested for testing the claim of the Holy Quran to divine origin. It is free from discrepancies. On this it is at once said that neither it is true that the Quran is entirely free from discrepancies, nor is it at all reasonable that a book free from discrepancies is necessarily of divine origin. Of course we cannot consider here the first as it would involve us in a discussion of all frivolous instances that have been urged; such as that in some places creation is said to have been effected in six days, but in one place in two days, or that in one place the infidels at Beder are said to have appeared to Musalmans as double their number, and in another they are said to have appeared less than their actual number in their sight. These can be discussed only in their appropriate places if they deserve discussion at all.

Here we will consider the second only. It is quite true that want of discrepancy cannot always be regarded as proof of divine origin. But there are cases in which it must. Remembering that the Quran was revealed in slices during a period extending over about a quarter of a century, during which the Prophet passed from the state of a single-handed worker to that at the head of legions, it is obvious that in the ordinary course of nature there must have arisen occasions when the promises he held out or the threats he offered should not have been fulfilled and should have given occasion for revelations that conflicted with the first. Had the prophecies not proceeded from the Omniscient Being Who knows the future as He knows the past they could not have been fulfilled in every

single case. Further it is known that much of the Revelation was revealed in praise or condemnation of particular persons. These revelations would have required to be revised when any man, praised or condemned from appearances or first actions, changed from believer to unbeliever or from unbeliever to believer. But in all these long years, among all the myriads of converts, hypocrites, and apostates, there is not a single instance of a man who was once condemned but later became a true believer or a man once praised but later proved a hypocrite or turned apostate.

From a literary point of view anybody can see that, even apart from the length of the period and the vast changes in the circumstances of the Prophet, which could not have failed to affect his literary powers, there is no other literary composition in the world, every line of which is as effective as any other, there are always some parts which are more, some which are less effective and some which have no effect whatever except as part of the whole. But in the Quran every verse is equally effective—though the subjects through which it ranges vary from sublimest conceptions of God to the details of the laws of inheritance.

Verse 83. The true *Ulil Amr* are the Imams, the successors of the Prophet as shown in note to verse 59 above. Here the verse says that news about disturbances should be communicated to them, so that they should be able to judge of them. But in practice when persons have been put in command of troops or as administrators by the Prophet or the Imams the communication of these news to them is practically the same as their reporting to the Imam himself. In fact, so far as the direction in this verse is concerned these officials may be regarded as *Ulil Amr* themselves, and they will set to make such investigations as may be proper. It is absurd to regard this verse as proof that the *Ulil Amr* whose obedience is made binding in verse 59 above are really these men put in charge of troops or of country as administrators.

Verse 84. Like all religious duties fighting in the way of God must always be a purely voluntary matter. People can only be induced to it and roused to ardour, but never compelled. This is essentially against the idea of an army which, as paid servants, can be compelled to go on war wherever required. Under a rightful Caliph, who must be infallible it may be all right, but under others it may become an instrument of evil. See note on 2:246 (Vol. I). Army may be kept for specialization in military operations, but actual going to war must be left to individual conscience.

Verse 35. *Shafaat* is from a root meaning pairing. Hence the idea of intercession is that the intercessor joins himself to the other taking up his cause. The word is here used in the original and fullest meaning. 'He who joins himself to another and assists him, and becomes to him as one of a pair or an intercessor in doing good or evil, and thus aids him and strengthens him partakes with him the benefit or the harm of it.' (Raghib).

SECTION 12.

Hypocrites to be treated as enemies unless they cease their activities.

88. Now what is the matter with you that ye are two parties regarding the hypocrites when God hath turned them over for what they earned? Desire ye to guide those whom God hath led astray? He whom God leadeth astray thou shalt by no means find a pathway for him.

89. They desire that ye should be infidels as they are infidels, so that ye may be (all) alike. Take therefore not from them for friends till they have fled from their homes for the cause of God. But if they turn back (from this) then seize them and slay them wherever ye find them and take none of them as friends or helpers.

90. Except those who have joined a people between whom and you there is an alliance, or those who come over to you—their breasts straitened to make war on you, or to make war on their own people. Had God pleased, He would have given them power against you, and then surely they would have made war upon you! So if they withdraw from you, and make not war against you, and offer you peace, then God alloweth you no occasion against them.

91. Ye will find others who seek to be safe from you as well as safe from their own people. So oft as they are sent back to mischief (*Fitna*) they fall prone into it. Then if they leave you not alone, and offer peace to you and with-

hold their hands, then seize them, and slay them, wherever ye find them. And against these of yours have We given you express authority.

Verse 88. As usual the commentators differ as to when and how these differences arose and who are the *munafiqs* referred to. Some say they are those who fell off and refused to go with the Prophet at Ohad, some that they were people at Mecca who pretended Islam but assisted infidels, some that they believed at Medina, afterwards apostalised in their hearts, and went over to Mecca. But the words are clearly general, since the hypocrites did not apostalise openly there were naturally differences of opinion among people about them; many generally believing them to be true Muslims in spite of one or two things that occasionally came to their knowledge against them. The Prophet was always discreetly silent about them. He gave the names of principal hypocrites to Huzafa, but strictly charged him not to disclose their names. Even in the case of such well-known *munafiqs* as Abdullah 'bn Obay, when some persons suggested that he may be put to death he declined saying, "People will say Mohammed kills his own men" (*Sahabees* is the word used). He even consented to pray his funeral prayer and gave his cloth to be used for his shroud. The Prophet's was a most difficult time, and he had to deal very carefully with the people. He well knew what the Islam of many of his people was worth, but he had to deal most kindly and courteously to them. Else the other people, who did not know what was in the heart of these men, would have fallen away from him and would have regarded him not a prophet but an unscrupulous unprincipled man. In fact it is a great mistake to infer anything about his real feelings from his general behaviour to the people. That is in reality the radical mistake of the Sunnis. The verses that were repeatedly revealed about the *munafiqs* were meant to keep people on their guard against such mistakes.

Verse 89. In this verse it is clearly said that it is the duty of the people to fight and kill the *munafiqs* when their hypocrisy becomes so manifest that there can be no shadow of doubt about it. Here *yuhajiroo fi sabilillah* does not refer to any actual Hijrat (leaving one's home) but to going on wars with the Prophet purely for faith and seeking the pleasure of God, not for love of booty. None purely such were, however, fought in the Prophet's time—as at the time it was too early. They were fought under Our Lord Ali at the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrwan. And in these battles he strictly forbade the taking of booty—which was the cause why the people gradually got tired of the wars and left him.

Verse 90. The waverers should, however, be left alone if they do not fight or assist others in fighting the Musalmans. They join unbelievers but only those who have made a pact with you.

Verse 91. If, however, they breed mischief when away from Muslim lands they may be fought.

SECTION 13.

Punishment for a believer killed by mistake. Those who intently murder believers. Caution required in treating a man as an enemy. Necessity of fighting.

92. And it is not for a believer to kill a believer but by mischance: and whoso killeth a believer by mischance shall set free a believer from slavery and the blood-money shall be paid to his family, unless they remit it in charity. But if the slain be of a people at enmity with you the freeing of a believing slave (sufficeth), and if he be of a people between whom and yourselves there is an alliance, then let the blood-money be paid to his family, and let him set free a slave who is a believer; and let him who hath not the means, fast two consecutive months. A penance enjoined by God; and God is Knowing, Wise!

93. But whoever shall kill a believer of set purpose, his recompense shall be Hell; for ever shall he abide in it; God will be wroth on him, and will curse him, and will provide for him a great torment.

94. O ye who believe! When ye sally forth in the cause of God, use discernment, and say not to every one who meeteth you with the salutation, Thou art not a believer, in your greed after the chance good things of this present life, for, with God gains are in abundance. Such hath been your wont in times past, but God hath been generous to you; use discernment, then, for God well knoweth what ye do.

95. Not alike are those of the believers who stay at home (other than those having any trouble) and those who fight in the cause of God with their possessions and their lives. God hath raised those who fight with their possessions and with their lives, rank above those who sit at home. Good hath He promised to all. But God hath distinguished those who fight above those who stay at home by a great recompense.

96. Ranks (assigned) by Him, and forgiveness, and mercy, for God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Verse 92. This penance holds good when the murder has been purely by mistake. When the murder has been wilful, for any reason whatever, the murderer is given over to the relatives of the murdered man to be put to death at their option. If they pardon them accepting a sum of money by way of compensation, the sin remains, which threatens to be covered by the next verse, and all possible penance must be done.

Verse 93. It is agreed on all hands that in its full application the punishment applies only to cases where a man has murdered a believer, *on account of his belief*, in which case it is clear that the murderer, however much he may profess it, is not a Muslim. This applies most especially to the murder of prophets and Imams. For such, doing it while professing to be Muslims it is doubtful if there is repentance even. God will not grant him grace for it.

Verse 94. The commentators mention several instances of persons slain by Musalmans on the pretext that they were not really Muslims. A most unfortunate case was that of Khalid whom the Prophet sent after the conquest of Mecca to some neighbouring tribes to call them to faith. On seeing Khalid coming the Bunu Jazeema took up arms to protect themselves, but made profession of Islam. Khalid said that if they were truly Musalmans they should put off their weapons, which they did, but immediately Khalid fell upon them and killed a large number of men. The Prophet on hearing of this raised his hands to Heaven and said "O God I am innocent of what Khalid has done." He then sent Our Lord Ali with money to console and conciliate the people. But this verse was revealed with the rest of Surah long before the conquest of Mecca as the other stories mentioned by the commentators show.

'You too were such aforetime' That is, you too were hiding your religion, not openly professing it so that there might be no doubt about it.

Verses 95. The Sunni commentators say that the words "not having any injury" were not in the original revelation but were afterwards revealed on the complaint of a blind *Sahabee* about this. It may thus be an instance of explanatory note of the *Wahye Gaire Matloo* kind (see Introduction) getting into the Text.

SECTION 14.

Those who were too weak to fly. Those who can fly (their homes) should not fear straitness.

97. Surely those whose (souls) angels take up (at death) (having been) cruel to their own souls, they will say (to them), What were you about? They will answer, We were the weak ones of the earth. They replied, Was not God's earth broad enough for you to flee away in? These! their home shall be Fire and what an evil resort it is!

98. Except the men and women and children who are not able to shift for themselves and are not led on the way to it.

99. So these, belike, God will forgive: for God is Pardoning, Forgiving.

100. Whoever flieth his country for the cause of God, will find in the earth abundant refuge and resources; and if any one shall quit his home and fly to God and His Apostle, and then death overtake him, his reward from God is sure: for God is Forgiving, Merciful!

Verses 97. This the case of people who remained with the enemy and made their persecution a pretext for not embracing Islam.

Verses 98. Really weak and helpless people are to be excepted. The Shias hold that this exception though revealed in connection with Hijra

applies equally to very ignorant people or those so depressed in life that they cannot be expected to make enquiries about true religion. Ordinarily even the thought of this cannot arise to them, and if it does arise they have not the proper means to attain to the Truth. Surely others will have to suffer for the evil of their ignorance—those who have means and opportunities to guide them, but neglect this duty.

SECTION 15.

Shortening the prayer when trouble is feared. Prayer when actually fighting. Continued activity required.

101. And when ye go about on the land it shall be sin on you to cut short your prayers ; if ye fear lest the infidels put you into trouble (*fitnah*) verily, the infidels are clear enemies to you.

102. And when thou art among them, and ledest the prayer for them, then let a party of them stand with thee, and let them take their arms, then when they shall have made their prostrations, let them retire to your rear : then let another party that hath not prayed come forward, and let them pray with you ; but let them take their precautions and their arms. Fain would the infidels wish that you neglect your arms and your baggage, that they might turn upon you all at once ! But it shall not be sinful on you to lay down your arms if ye be troubled by rain or if ye be sick. But take your precautions. Verily, God hath made ready a disgraceful punishment for the infidels.

103. And when ye shall have ended the prayer, let the name of God be on your lips, standing, or sitting, or reclining on your sides ; and so soon as ye are secure, observe prayer ; for for the faithful, prayer is a prescribed duty and for stated hours (*Kilaban mauqutan* a timed book).

104. And slacken not in pursuit of the enemy. If ye suffer, assuredly they suffer also as ye suffer but ye hope from God what they hope not. And God is Knowing, Wise.

Vers 101. The Shias are unanimous in holding that on journeys the two prayers of daytime are to be said two *Rakaats* instead of four as ordinarily. They are also unanimous that this is irrespective of whether there is any fear of infidels or not. If they are at ease they may spend any amount of time in voluntary prayers or other devotion, but this matter of discipline must be left unmolested. The journey must not be less than 27 miles, nor is the concession allowed if a man halts at a place for 10 days or more. The journey must be for a lawful purpose. No concession is allowed where a man has to be practically always on tour.

The Sunnis are divided as to whether this is voluntary or compulsory, but generally the practice is not to do it. But they seem agreed that fear of infidels is no condition to it. See *Mawahib* where the discussion is given at length. One of the traditions cited from *Maalim* is interesting. According to it the part of the verse from the condition 'if ye fear &c.' is part of the revelation about *Salatul khauf*, prayers in times of danger, described in the next verse. Abu Ayyub Ansari says there was a distance of one year between the first part of the verse and the latter beginning of which joins on to the next verse. Irrespective of that there are various traditions to the effect that the prayers were originally of two *Rakaats* each. In the case of the two prayers of daytime they were extended to four in the case of prayers at home—they remained the same in the case of journeys. There are also numerous traditions to the effect that the concession having been come down from Heaven, must be thankfully availed of and not presumptuously spurned away. Thus the Shia practice has powerful support in Sunni traditions.

Vers 102. This is *Salatul khauf* prayer in time of danger. It is one *Rakaat* only. It must be prayed in the very thick of war.

SECTION 16.

The cause of the dishonest not to be taken up. They accuse innocent persons.

105. Verily, We have sent down the Book to thee with the truth, that thou mayest judge between men by what God has made thee to see, and be not a disputer on behalf of the dishonest.

106. And implore pardon of God. Verily, God is Forgiving, Merciful.

107. And plead not for those who act unfaithfully to their souls; for God loveth not any who is a hardened deceiver criminal.

108. From men they hide themselves; but they hide themselves not from God: and He is with them when they hold nightly discourses which please Him not, but God is round about all their doings!

109. Behold! ye are those who plead in their favour in this present life; but who shall plead with God for them on the Day of the Resurrection? Or who will stand up to defend them.

110. Yet he who doth evil, or sinneth against his soul, and thereafter asketh pardon of God, shall find God, Forgiving, Merciful:

111. And whoever worketh to sinfulness he earneth it not save to the hurt of his own soul. And God is Knowing, Wise!

112. And whoever worketh to a misdemeanour or a sin, and then layeth it on the innocent, he surely beareth the guilt of calumny and a manifest crime.

NOTE.—The incident which led to the revelation of these verses was that Taama 'bn Ubairaq, a so-called Sahabee, having stolen a coat of mail and hidden it with at a Jew's, afterwards accused the Jew of the theft, while his tribe supported him and expected the Prophet to decide in his favour. But the Prophet was not a man to do this, notwithstanding the open enmity of the Jews, and he cleared the Jew of the charge.

The verses, which are very serious, are very important to bear in mind. The tendency to make light of considerations of justice out of communal prejudice is very common, and some of it may be seen in some of the rulings about evidence in Muslim law-books. It is perhaps for this reason that this incident, insignificant in itself is given a permanent place in the Quran.

SECTION 17.

Efforts to destroy the Muslims. Secret counsels of the enemy. Opposition to the Prophet doomed to failure.

113. And but for the grace and mercy of God upon thee a party among them had certainly resolved to mislead thee, but they shall mislead none save themselves, nor in aught shall they harm thee. And God hath made the Book and the wisdom to descend upon thee : and hath taught thee what thou knewest not : and great hath been the grace of God towards thee.

114. In most of their secret talks there is nothing good, but only in his who enjoineth charity, or that which is right, or concord among men. Whoso doth this, out of desire to please God, We will give him a great reward :

115. But he who sundereth himself hostilely from the Prophet after that ' the guidance ' hath become clear to him, and followeth any other path other than that of the faithful, We will let him have his wilfulness (*Nowallihi ma Tawalla*) and will cast him into Hell ; and O ! what an evil journey thither !

Verse 113. The reference is to importunities with which the friends and relations of the thief plagued the Prophet to take up his part.

Verse 114. This is said of the Musalmaus of the time generally. The Ahmadi Commentator tries to throw the condemnation on the hypocrites, but the latter part of the verse shows clearly that this is not so. The Prophet was in fact disgusted with the people he was surrounded with.

Verse 115. Bashir one of the Bani Ubairaq went over to Mecca and committed some thefts there and was eventually killed there.

' We will turn him to that to which he has (himself) turned.' That is withdraw Our grace from him and let him follow his desires.

' And follows other than the way of the believers.' The way of the believers is that when the Prophet pronounces judgement against them and their interests, they submit and repent and try to take his rebuke

thankfully. The Sunni commentators, however, see in these words a proof of their principle of *Ijmaa* 'general unanimity of opinion among the Musalmans' (meaning of course the orthodox, that is their own sect), on which the Caliphate of early Caliphs was based, and which, for the decision of matters of doubt in law and religion, is considered by them as equal in authority to the Quran and Hadees. For this they also put in the mouth of the Prophet a Hadees "My *Ummat* 'people' will not unite on error." It is not necessary to discuss this extremely precarious principle here.

SECTION 18.

Polytheism not pardonable. The devil suggests evil practices. Faith and goodness well bear their reward.

116. Surely God will not forgive the joining (of any other) with Him—all besides this He may forgive to whom He will; and he who joineth other things with God, hath wandered away into a far-gone error.

117. They invoke not, beside Him, any but females; and they invoke not any but Satan the rebellious.

118. God cursed him and he said, I will assuredly take from out of Thy servants a share appointed.

119. And will assuredly lead them astray, and will surely stir vain desires within them, and will certainly command them, so they shall cut the ears of animals; and I will command them, and so they shall certainly change the appearance given to God's creatures. So he who taketh Satan rather than God for his patron, is ruined with palpable ruin.

120. He maketh them promises, and he stirreth vain desires within them; but Satan promiseth not aught but only to deceive.

121. These! their dwelling is Hell! no escape shall they find from it.

122. But they who believe and do the things that are right, We will bring them into gardens 'neath which the rivers flow; For ever shall they abide therein. A promise, true, it is of God. And who is more truthful than God in what he sayeth.

123. Not according to your wishes; nor according to wishes of the people of the Book! He who doth evil shall be recompensed for it. Patron or helper, beside God, shall he find none.

124. And whoso doth the things that are right, whether male or female, and he (or she) be a believer,—these then shall enter Paradise, and they shall not be wronged the skin of a date-stone.

125. And who hath a better religion than he who resigneth himself to God, so he be righteous, and followeth the faith of Abraham, the pure of faith? And God took Abraham for His friend.

126. All that is in the Heavens all that is on the Earth is God's and God encompasseth all things!

Verse 116. See note on verse 48 where the warning against *Shirk* (joining anything to God, or regarding Him as composite or the like) is given to *Ahle Kitab*, Jews and Christians. Here it is the Arabian polytheists who are addressed or spoken of.

Verse 117. *Inas* is plural of *Unsa* (female). Hasan Basari says every one of the Arabian tribes had an idol, which they called the *unsa* (female) of such a tribe (Razi).

Though the reference is to the features of idolatry in Arabia particularly, the words are true of all idolatrous religions in the world. It is a *nakbat*, curse, for their wilful religion of God that when they set to invent substitutes for Him it invariably happens that it is some way

low or disgusting. There is always something effeminate or revolting in the character of these false gods. This is true all the world over.

And it may be noted the curse holds true also when people rejecting true religious leaders, prophets and Imams, set up other persons in their place to follow and adore. The characters of these men also will be found to have something disgraceful in them. A remarkable instance of this as late as the last century is the proclamation of a vision by the founder of the Qadiani sect about the masculine power of God exerted on himself, for which and others similar see *Tadibul Majanin* &c.

Verse 118. Being cursed of God Satan gets all the more resolved to oppose the will of God and says he would exert his best to seduce mankind and take them to his perdition. This is the "share appointed" for him in the nature of things, nature of man and forces round him. Though surely in God's knowledge from the very creation, were it something decreed absolutely that men must go over to him, whether he or they will it or not, Satan could not say this by way of opposition to God. There is nothing of predestination here.

Verse 119. "Will slit the ears of cattle." This was done on *habirah*, a she-camel that had brought forth five young ones, the last being male, when she was devoted to gods and exempted from being ridden or slain. Also some other animals were treated in this way.

"Alter God's Creation." Some take it to mean tempering with the true religion of God. Cf 30 : 30. "Then set your fall upright for religion in the right state : nature made by God in which He has made men ; there is no altering of God's creation. That is the right religion." Others, who appear to be the more correct, say it refers to such practices as castration, tatooing, shaving of beard &c.

Verse 123. For the vain desires of the idolators *Surah 6 : 29* "There is nothing but our life in this world and we shall not be raised," That of the Jews and Christians was "We are sons of God and His beloved ones," (5 : 18). The Musalmans are apt to incline to one or the other view, as history too obviously shows.

SECTION 19.

Justice to be done to orphans when their mothers are taken in marriage. Reconciliation between husband and wife. Justice among

wives. Separation of husband and wife. Carefulness as regards one's duty enjoined.

127. They ask thee for the law in regard to women : Say : God declareth the law you about them ; and what is rehearsed to you, in the Book, concerning female orphans to whom ye give not their due, while ye desire to marry them ; and also with regard to weak among children ; and that ye deal with fairness towards orphans. And whatever of goodness ye do, then verily God knoweth it.

128. And if a wife fear ill usage or estrangement on the part of her husband, then shall it be no fault on the twain if they effect an agreement between them amicably, for reconciliation is best. And avarice has been made to be present to (people's) minds ; but if ye act kindly and fear God, then, verily, God is aware of what ye do !

129. And ye will not have it at all in your power to hold the balance evenly between women, keenly though you may desire to do so, so be not inclined wholly (to one) so that ye leave the other of them as it were in suspense ; but if ye effect a reconciliation and fear God, (in the matter) then, verily, God is Forgiving, Merciful ;

130. But if they separate, God will render both independent out of His abundance ; and God is Vast, (in bounty), Wise.

131. And whatever is in the Heavens and in the Earth is God's ! We have already enjoined those to whom Scriptures were given before you, and yourselves, that ye fear God, and if ye turn (unmindful as) disbelievers then (know that) surely whatever is in the Heavens and in the Earth is God's ; and God is Self-sufficient, Praiseworthy.

132. All that is in Heaven and all that is in Earth is God's ! God is sufficient as a guardian (*Vakil*).

133. If He pleased, He could cause you to pass away, O ye people, and bring in others (in your stead), and God is well able to do this.

134. Whoever desire the reward of this world, then with God is the reward of this world and the next, and God is Hearing, Seeing.

Verse 127. The construction is obscure, but the meaning is clear enough. You ask about your obligations in the matter of women. God tells you His will in their case, and also in the case of orphan girls whom you have in your charge as guardians—you want to marry them without giving them legitimate dowries, and also about the weak among children (who were debarred from inheritance among pagan Arabs). The will of God in every case is that you act with conscience and justice. You should not debar women from inheritance (following the custom of pagan Arabs). As to the orphan girls in your charge you should not seek to marry them at less than the reasonable dowry, or prevent them from marrying other men seeking their property. About little children that you do not prevent them from inheritance. And He charges you to act justly in the matter of orphans.

Verse 128. It is the right of every wife that her husband should love her and give all reasonable attention to her. If she fears her husband has a sort of aversion for her she is advised to effect some sort of reconciliation with him on some terms and be content with them rather than demand all these rights and insist on divorce in case the man is not prepared. If she is content she is the doer of good, and if on her insistence the man contents to live with her in spite of his aversion he is the doer of good. Whoever is too insistent comes under the condemnation of 'And avarice (*Shuhh*) has been made to be present to men's minds.' *Shuhh* is the worst and most ignoble kind of avarice. The only course possible now is separation by divorce.

Verse 129. It is impossible for man to be perfectly equal in his love to each of his several wives. So that high ideal, however desirable, is not insisted on and equity in dealings should be adopted as much as possible as required in verse 3.

SECTION 20.

Firmness in justice and truth. Firmness in faith enjoined. The weak in faith forsake truth for the sake of worldly honour.

135. O ye who believe! be always standing fast to justice, witnesses on the side of God, though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kindred, whether the party be rich, or poor, God is nearer (than you) to both. Therefore follow not your desires, lest ye swerve from truth. And if ye prevaricate or turn aside, then, God, verily is well aware of what ye do.

136. O ye who believe! believe in God and His Apostle and the Book which He hath sent down to His Apostle, and the Book which He hath sent down aforetime. And Whoever believeth not on God and His Angels and His Books and His Apostles, and in the Last Day, he verily hath strayed away into far-gone error.

137. Verily, they who believed, then became unbelievers, then believed, and again became unbelievers, and then increased their unbelief, it is not for God to forgive them or guide them into the way.

138. Announce to the hypocrites that a painful torment doth await them.

139. Those who take the unbelievers for friends besides the faithful—do they seek honour at their hands? For verily, all honour belongeth unto God!

140. And already hath He sent this down to you in the Book that when ye hear the signs of God disbelieved in and mocked at, then sit ye not with them, until they engage in other discourse; otherwise ye will become like them. Verily God will gather the hypocrites and the infidels in Hell all together.

141. Who keep watching you. Then if God grants you a victory, they say, Are we not with you?; and if the infidels have a measure of it, they say to them, Were we not superior to you (*Alam nastahwiz alaikum*) and did we

not defend you from those believers? God shall judge between you on the day of the resurrection, and God will by no means make a way for the infidels against the believers.

Verse 135. God is more to them, that is, than their own souls or any of their friends or well-wishers. To protect a man by false evidence is not really doing him good.

Verse 136. *Kitab* is here used for the whole of the Revelation, whether given to Our Holy Prophet or those before him. The command in *Aminu* 'believe' evidently means complete or perfect your faith in.

137. In a general way the words may be applied to all waverers who again and again went over to unbelief. But when it is said that finally they came to be infidels and increased in infidelity there is certainly no question of their forgiveness and their being guided to the right path. The verse surely speaks of persons who having believed—truly in their own way—repeatedly fell over to infidelity, *virtually*, by obstinately refusing to accept some of the commands of the Prophet, some of the revelations given to him. These are the *Munafiqs*, dissemblers spoken of in the next verse. See note on 2: 8 (Vol 1) where the term is fully explained. The Shia commentators take this verse to be prophetic, for which see Qummi's Commentary.

Verse 140. 'In the sixth chapter of the Holy Quran which was revealed at Mecca we find this injunction in Verse 68. The Muslims are told to leave the assembly where truth is mocked at, for if they do not, they will grow accustomed to such mockery. *Surely then you would be like them.* A Christian annotator draws from these words the strange conclusion that the Muslims are prohibited from bearing any criticism of their religion. It does not require more than common sense to understand that mockery or criticism are not the same thing.'

The verse could not be addressed to hypocritical Musalmans; it is only those who though believers truly lacked sufficient feeling for their beliefs who are warned here.

SECTION 21.

Hypocrites' deceitfulness. Friendly relations with foes. Their ultimate fate. Abuse prohibited. Rejection of Apostles amounts to unbelief.

142. Surely the hypocrites (seek to) deceive God, but He will requite their deceit to them (*Huwa Khadiahum*, He will deceive them); and when they stand up for prayer they stand up sluggishly; they do it (only) to be seen of men and they remember not God but little.

143. Wavering between that (and this) (belonging) neither to these, nor to those, and whomsoever God leadeth astray, by no means shalt thou find a path for him.

144. O ye who believe! take not infidels for friends rather than believers. Would ye furnish God with close right to punish you. (*Alaikum sultanun mubinun*, "manifest authority against you.")

145. Verily, the hypocrites shall be in the lowest abyss of the fire: and, by no means shalt thou find a helper for them;

146. Except those who turn and amend, and hold fast by God, and purify their faith for God, these then shall be with the faithful, and anon will God bestow on the faithful a great reward.

147. What has God to do with putting you to torment if ye be grateful, and believe for God is the Appreciator (*Shakir*, of worth), the Knowing.

PART VI.

148. God loveth not an evil word spoken aloud, unless by one that hath been wronged. And God is Hearing, Knowing!

149. Whether ye publish what is good, or conceal it, or pardon evil, verily God is Pardoning, Powerful!

150. Of a truth they who believe not on God and His Apostles, and seek to make a distinction between God and

His Apostles, and say, Some we believe and some we believe not, and desire to take a way betwixt and between.

151. These! they are unbelievers truly! and for the unbelievers have We prepared a disgraceful punishment.

152. And they who believe on God and His Apostles, and make no difference between them—these! We will bestow on them their reward, and God is Forgiving, Merciful!

Verse 142. For the expression 'God will deceive them', see note on 2 : 15 (Vol. 1).

Verse 143. God's guidance is conditioned by willing response on the part of men. When His grace for guidance is cut off by persistency on the part of men that is practically non-existent for them, and being left to their evil propensities they are led on and on to error. See note on 2 : 24 &c. and Supp.

Verse 144. Mark the expression. God assumes no authority to punish the innocent. This is against Sunnis of Ashaari School.

Verse 145. This cannot be said of those who having really not believed feigned belief from wordly considerations, not even if they meant thereby to destroy Islam. It can only be said of those who knowing truth and believing it somehow got to hate it or part of it and yet pretending faith sought, by deceiving people, to destroy religion.

Verse 146. Holding fast to God is not possible without the *wasila* spoken of in 5 : 39 below.

Verse 147. *Shukr* in the case of us, creatures, is gratefulness, in the case of God, recognition of merit, increasing it in His estimation and multiplying His grace and reward thereon.

Verse 148. This verse gives liberty to the oppressed man to publicly speak ill of his oppressor. This is no sin in the sight of God, it is part of the punishment due to the oppressor. Neither is it inconsistent with patience, where patience in such cases is commendable. It is only bad when it is likely to give rise to further evils. It may help to remove much of rancour from the heart. But it must be noted that in all ordinary cases it is a permission merely. To restrain oneself is always better, especially if it is really in a spirit of charity and attended with a desire for the man's forgiveness. This is referred to in the next verse. An exception must of course be made for cases in which such

charitable feelings are in themselves sinful, as in the case of persons known to be enemies of God and His prophets.

Verse 150. To make a distinction between God and His Apostles may mean to believe in one and not in the other, or it may mean an insufficient belief in the latter leading to the rejection of some of their commands and teachings suspecting that they may not be from God. There were many such even among the prominent Musalmans at the time, and even at the present day. So the some in the next clause may refer to prophets or to their teachings. Anyway this is included in the last clause of the verse.

SECTION 22.

The Jews violate the covenant. Their accusations against Jesus and Mary, and the truth relating to the crucifixion of Jesus. Their punishment. Some believe.

153. The People of the Book ask of thee to bring down a book from heaven; so indeed they had asked a greater thing than this of Moses! for they said, shew us God manifestly: whereupon for (this) their wickedness the thunderbolt lay hold upon them. Then they took unto themselves the Calf (to worship) after that clear sign had come to them, but We forgave them this, and conferred on Moses manifest authority.

154. And We uplifted the mountain over them at their covenant, and We said to them, Enter the gate adoring: and We said to them, Transgress not in the matter of the Sabbath, and We took from them a very firm pledge.

155. So, for that their breaking of their covenant, and rejecting the signs of God, and putting the prophets to death unjustly, and their saying, Our hearts are uncircumcised,—Nay, but God hath sealed on them for their unbelief, so that they believe not but a little—

156. And for their unbelief; and for their having spoken against Mary a grievous calumny.—

157. And for their saying, Verily we have slain the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, the Apostle of God, yet they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but they had only his likeness (or they got deceived, *Shubbeha lahum*). And they who differ about it are surely in a doubt therein. No (sure) knowledge have they about it except the following of a conjecture, and they did not slay him, certainly.

158. Nay God took him up to Himself. And God is Mighty, Wise!

159. There shall not be one of the People of the Book but shall believe in Him before his death, and on the Day of Resurrection He will be a witness against them.

160. So because of the wickedness from the Jews, have We forbidden them goodly viands which had been (before) allowed them—and because of their keeping away many from the path of God;

161. And because of their taking usury, though they were forbidden it, and their devouring men's properties unlawfully; and We have got ready for the infidels among them a grievous torment.

162. But those well-grounded in knowledge among them and the believers who believe in that which hath been sent down to thee, and in what hath been sent down before thee, and who observe prayer, and pay the *Zucat* (charity of obligation) and believe in God and the Later Day,—these! We will grant them a great reward.

Verse 153. For the references see 2: 55, 56 & 92, 93 and notes thereon. Why all miracles of the kind asked must be refused is explained in note to 2: 118 (Vol. I).

Verse 154. For references see 2 : 62, 58 &c.

Verse 155. For references see 2 : 82, 87 &c.

Verse 156. And the nominal Christians of the present day (as Haekel, Dr Loofs &c) are coming over to this. The more orthodox will surely disown them, but these men surely had a Christian burial. The calumny is well-known, and so there remains no doubt that Our Blessed Lady was unmarried. What becomes then of the Ahmadi contention that Our Lord Jesus was born in a natural way ?

Verse 157. This is the clearest declaration that Our Lord was not crucified ; but that the people got somehow deceived in the matter. How they got deceived is explained in Muslim traditions, which with little difference in detail, assert that a companion of Our Lord having offered to be killed in his place, he was miraculously changed in appearance, appearing to resemble Jesus, and so it was he who was seized, tried and crucified while Our Lord went away to Heaven. The substance of it, that Our Lord was not crucified, but someone else in his place is one of the established beliefs of Islam held tenaciously from the earliest times, in spite of its ridicule by Jews and Christians as mere assertion, and it could not have been so but for express teachings of the Prophet, teachings which were equally as definite and precise as they were famous. So even if there were no such clear verses in the Quran the thing would have been held an unshakeable Islamic doctrine, and so it is all the more idle and useless in the Ahmadi Commentator and those like him to exert their ingenuity in trying to get rid of the plain meaning of the words here. I know they are actuated to this by a sincere (though not therefore an excusable) desire to get rid of what appears an unanswerable objection. The evidence of the Christians, Jews and Romans is all against us in that it affirms crucifixion of Jesus, and the miracle we assert no one would credit nowadays. For this reason it is convenient to deny that the words mean what they do. *Ma qataluhu* means not that nothing of the kind was done but that the act of murder was not completed, Jesus was brought down from the Cross before life was extinct. *Ma Salabuhu* does not mean that he was not crucified but that he was not stripped or his bones were not taken out, as in theory of a Moulvi Ahsan ; (see *Yanabiul Islam* Urdu version). To crown all *Wama qataluhu gayinan* is translated in the Ahmadi Version as 'they knew it not for sure' adding in the margin 'Or killed him.'

We think we may be spared a discussion of these literary devices—the *anna* controversial pamphlets deal with them effectively. We think

it sufficient to say that all the meanings suggested may be allowed as possible without shaking our belief that it is the crucifixion of Our Lord really that is denied in this verse. One thing is right. *Wa takin shubbiha lahum* may well be translated, the matter was made dubious to them. But, then, what does that prove ?

Nothing also need be said of the learned arguments by which it is sought to be proved that Our Lord is buried in Kashmir, where a tomb goes by the name of the tomb of Yus Asaf Nabi—the suggestion being that having been taken down alive from the Cross Our Lord left his country secretly and came over to Kashmir where he came to be known as Yus Asaf.

Verse 158. 'Nay, God raised him up to Himself.' See note on 3:53, 54. The expression is the same as used there, showing all the more that the words are to be taken in a real sense. Further, as has been repeatedly said in these pages, if the story of Our Lord's Ascension as popularly held by the Christians were wrong it was *imperatively necessary* to carefully avoid words that could appear to mean that. The Ahmadi Commentator's version, which is again "Allah exalted him in His presence" here, only shows that God had a sad lack of proper expressions. He notices that this is said in contrast to "they did not kill him or crucify him" said in the last verse, but explains that is so because in Deut 21:23 we have that "he that is hanged is accursed of God" though that is only of men really deserving death. Neither a man, truly innocent, becomes accursed of God by the mere fact of his being sent to the Cross, nor a man having been put on the Cross as a criminal worthy of death, and brought down by some mistake before life is extinct, can in public estimation escape the ignominy of the punishment. His case was so clear—and the case of every prophet is—that it needed no clearing, but if it really pleased God to make an impression on people about it could only be done by showing some way that he was miraculously saved from their clutches. This the Muslim traditions say was the case, resulting in doubts about the matter in the people at large (as is referred to verse 157); though afterwards as usually happens the miracle came gradually to be discredited and the sensible fact accepted in spite of its difficulties. The appearance was much like Jesus, but to close and careful observers it was clear that he was not the man. Further many who had seen him rise to Heaven refused to believe that it was he who was crucified (Mawahib).

Judas, it is said, stooped to betray Our Lord thinking he was well able to protect himself by his Divine power (see Ency. Britt. Art Judas). So might many others have thought, doing nothing to protect him. Per-

haps they believed (by prophecy) that he was destined to rise up alive to Heaven. Our Lord by his example showed that even if he escaped miraculously he would do so only by having a substitute to die for him. Such ideas mean that one should do nothing to protect holy men and leave all to God. The Holy Prophet too when leaving Mecca on the night of danger was careful to leave Our Lord Ali behind to sleep in his bed in his place, though that had a graver import. See note to 2: 207 (Vol. I).

It would be proper here to state the grounds on which, *irrespective of Muslim traditions and quite on the basis of Christian accounts* it is doubtful that Our Lord was crucified.

(1). We know from the Gospels that Pilate who ordered the execution was extremely averse to it, and did all he could to show that he regarded Our Lord as innocent. Though weakness may explain anything, it does not appear how he, a Governor of a mighty and powerful empire, could be so weak.

(2). We know * also that, in spite of this weakness and the heinous iniquity it resulted, in Pilate was regarded by early Christians as a saint. This passes our comprehension, unless it were a fact that by some ruse he saved Our Lord, making the Jews for the time believe that he was really executed. Indeed even this is not sufficient for the title of saint given him. It seems the early Christians knew that he was a secret convert.

(3). It is extremely strange that Christians should have been so destitute of religious spirit that they quietly looked on to the murder of their prophet, and what to say of taking up sword did not make the slightest stir in the matter. No other people could ever have put up with this. The beautiful explanation is that Christ would not approve of this. I say in spite of any prohibition even they could not have controlled themselves. They surely knew that Our Lord was not slain at all. Why in spite of their knowledge that Christ was not killed the disciples continued to profess belief in his crucifixion is easily explained. It was in Pilate's interest that they did this. It was by his secret instructions that he was allowed to escape, and it was but proper that the secret should not be out.

(4). Our Lord had prayed that he may be saved from the trouble that was gathering round him. Mathew 26: 39. 'O my father, let this

* See article by Lord Shaw of Durfermline cited in Muslim Review for March 1929 under Caption 'Pilate's Dilemma.'

cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt.' Though the usual words 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt' are added, it is impossible to believe that his prayer was not granted.

(5). The earliest Christians, several whole sects among them as Basilidians, Cerinthians Corporations &c., held that Our Lord was not crucified, but that Simon the Cyrrenian or other disciple was crucified in his place, as has been abundantly shown in the extract from Sale's note to 3: 53. It will be observed that, contrary to the others who were led astray, these Christians retained the true belief about Our Lord that he was not a god but a mere man as other Holy prophets.

(6). The probability of Simon the Cyrrenian gains strength from the fact that according to John, Mathew, and Mark, Christ himself carried his Cross on his back and seven places are still shown where he fell down, but according to Luke it was Simon the Cyrrenian who carried the Cross. Probably both led the Cross by turns. In these circumstances it was very easy for Simon to be crucified if by miracle he was made to appear like Jesus, or if he resembled him very closely and if, as is said in Muslim traditions, he had of his own accord volunteered to die in place of Our Lord, which surely every believer would have gladly done. This change of persons was all the more easy, as Pilate, to say nothing of his being probably a secret convert and so interested in Our Lord's escape, was at least very much averse to his execution, and so his Roman guards would naturally be uninterested and done their work in a careless, purfunctory manner. According to John's account Our Lord had miraculously healed one of their party. his ears have been cut by Simon Peter, at the time of his arrest. Would these men have been keen to see him put to death.

(7). From the earliest times Christians love, venerate and even adore the Crucifix. Can there be a more unnatural sentiment? They should have had the most intense hatred and abhorrence for it, if Our Lord was really put to death upon it. To my mind the custom was originally meant to serve as a memorial that Our Lord escaped by means of a sacrifice made on the Cross.

(8). Finally there is a sort of *indirect* evidence of the truth of Muslim views. All know that Muslim traditions unanimously give the lie to Our Lord's Crucifixion. On the other hand they always speak of Our Lord's Ascension to Heaven, which according to the Acts of the Apostles was (about) 40 days after the supposed Crucifixion. Now if a Muslim tradition speaking of the Ascension of Our Lord bears unquestionable

signs of its Divine inspiration there would be little room for doubt that Our Lord's Ascension was true, not his Crucifixion. Such a tradition we find in Our Lord Hasan's speech he delivered after the death of his father (22nd or 23rd of Ramzan) in which he says that was the day on which Our Lord Jesus was raised up to Heaven. Anybody can see that Our Lord Hasan had not sufficient mathematical training to be able to find out the day of the Muslim lunar year on which the Ascension 40 days after 27th March, year 33. A.D., the date ascribed to the Crucifixion in a copper engraving purporting to be copy of Pilate's order. I have calculated and found that the day was exactly the 22nd of Ramzan. Details are published in the Muslim Review March, 1928.

verse 159. To explain this verse the Sunni commentators say several things. Either that Jews must believe on Christ sometime before their death, that is, usually at the moment of death when it avails them nothing. Or that Jews and Christians must believe in Our Holy Prophet in the same way. Or that those who will be present at the time of Our Lord's second advent with Our Lord the Mahdi of Islam will believe in him before his death. This is the most received view and is based on very numerous traditions. This is also the Shia view, only they do not confine these believers to those living at the time, but say that those dead will be revived and then die again. This doctrine of *Rajaat* will be discussed in note to 21: 96, 27: 85, 86 and other appropriate places.

Verse 160. This shows that legal restrictions are sometimes of the nature of punishment. These can be withdrawn later—abrogation.

Verse 162. Since the old scriptures did not contain such mysterious passages as some of the *Mutashabihat* of the Quran (see 3: 6 and Introduction) learned men who were gifted with spiritual insight and who had sufficient strength of mind to be unmoved by prejudices and embraced Islam are called well-rooted or firm in knowledge among them.

SECTION 23.

Revelation to the Prophet follows the line of earlier prophets. The rejectors. Denial of Jesus' Divinity.

163. Verily, We have revealed to thee as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him, and as We revealed to

Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes and Jesus and Job, and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon and to David gave We the Psalms. (*Zabur*).

164. And Apostles We have mentioned to thee before and Apostles We have not mentioned unto thee—And God spake unto Moses in the perfect mode of speaking to (*takliman*).

165. Apostles conveying glad tidings and giving warnings that men, after those Apostles, might have no plea against God. And God is Mighty, Wise!

166. But God is (Himself) witness of what He hath sent down to thee: With His knowledge hath He sent it down unto thee and the angels also bear witness: but God is sufficient for a witness!

167. Verily, those who believe not and keep others from the way of God have assuredly gone far astray.

168. Verily, they who believe not, and act iniquitously it is not for God to pardon them, nor that He guide them to a way.

169. Except the way to Hell, in which they shall abide for ever! And this is easy for God.

170. O men! now hath an Apostle come to you with truth from your Lord. Believe then it will be better for you. But if ye believe not, then, all that is in the Heavens and the Earth is God's, and God is Knowing, Wise!

171. O ye People of the Book! Overstep not bounds in your religion; and speak not of God, except only the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an Apostle of God, and His Word which he cast at Mary, and a Spirit (proceeding) from Himself. Believe, therefore in God and His Apostles, and say not, (there are) "Three:"—Forbear—

it will be better for you. God is only one God! Far be it from His purity (*subhanahu*) that He should have a son! His whatever is in the Heavens, and whatever is in the Earth! And God is sufficient as a care-taker (*wakilan*).

Verse 163. The order in which the prophets are named in this verse is ridiculed by Gieger and other critics of Islam. And certainly it looks very irregular. But a closer reflection on the main features of the lives of these prophets will change the ridicule into an admiration. Just consider

1. Abraham. Preacher, persecuted by Namrod.
2. Ishmael. Left helpless on the plains of Arabia.
3. Isaac, Jacob and the tribes. Patriarchs having comparative peace and security.
4. Jesus. Seeking to storm Jerusalem. Eventually barely escaped death at the hands of the Jews.
5. Job. Suffered great tribulations losing all and then regained more than he had lost.
6. Jonah. Divine punishment came on his people, but was stayed. Himself was swallowed by a fish and came out alive.
7. Aaron. Fighting his people to victory.
8. Solomon. Full sovereignty.

Now consider the Apostolic career of the Prophet (1) First much persecuted by his people, barely saved through the succour of his uncle (2) Then quite helpless after the death of Abu Talib (3) Gradually got a strong position after the conversion of Hamza and the conversion of the Abyssinian King Najashi. This was sufficient at least to keep the Meccans within bounds, and the Prophet enjoys a patriarchal position in spite of the enemies (4) His mission gets successful at Medina and he clearly shows warlike designs. The Meccans get alarmed and seek to kill him. He escapes but (5) loses everything he had; but gradually gets more than he has lost (6 & 7) Divine punishment hovers on the heads of the Meccans, but is stayed, only troubles of all kinds befall them and meanwhile the Prophet leads his men in fighting like Aaron. At a time there comes a state like to Jonah swallowed by the fish (the battle of Confederates) but he comes out unseathed without anything of fighting (8) The end is complete sovereignty over all Arabia.

Moses and David might be expected in this list of names, but since they stand in a special relation to the Holy Prophet, the former singing his praises throughout the Psalms, and the latter being his like, they are spoken of separately at the endings of this and the next verse.

Thus the verse means not merely that the Prophet was inspired as those before him—a thing which hardly needed a revelation to tell him, but it has a deeper meaning. The character of his Apostleship passed through all the phases that characterised all these Apostles.

Verse 165. *Takliman*, speaking, is used to intensify speak in *Kallam-allaho* 'God spoke to' Moses. From this some understand the perfect form of speaking, that is, not through the medium of voice and hearing, but purely mental, *Wahy*, inspiration.

Verse 171. *Kalimatuhu alqaba ila Maryama* 'The word be cast to Mary.' *Wa ruhun minho* 'And spirit (proceeding) from Him.' It is presumptuous to say more about this than is contained in these words. But for the difficulty in the way of comprehension in the sense of making of mental image of the process, which is perhaps impossible, I think the words are very simple. What happens when conception takes place in the ordinary way? The male germ fertilises the female, and it is the starting-point of the new creation; you say the new creature is just that germ further developed. Suppose there is no ovum and a duly fertile one is created by miracle, by spiritual force—say if that is impossible—what would you say? The command of God and His spirit—for the force is nothing else—taking flesh. It is nothing but a new creation created entirely by a miracle.

Of course this is too much for the Ahmadi Commentator who would have the word to be nothing but a prophecy gone before which he came to fulfil, and so on about *alqaba* 'cast to' and *Ruh* 'spirit' which it tires one's patience to discuss. See note on 2 : 87 (Vol. I) and Supp.

SECTION 24.

Jesus a servant of God. The Quran is the true light. Law of inheritance supplemented.

172. The Messiah doth by no means disdain that he should be a servant of God, nor do the angels who are nigh unto Him. And whoso disdaineth His service, and is proud, then, God will gather them all to Himself.

173. And to those who believe and do the things that are right, will He pay them their due recompense, and out of His bounty will He increase them: but as for those who are disdainful and proud, He will punish them with a grievous punishment.

174. And none beside God shall they find to protect or to help them.

175. O man! now hath a proof come to you from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light.

176. So, as to those who believe in God and hold fast to Him, these will He cause to enter into His mercy and grace, and along the straight way unto Himself will He guide them.

177. They ask them for the law. Say: God instructeth you about the (*Kalalah*) distant kindred. If a man die childless, but have a sister, half what he shall have shall be her's; and if she die childless he shall be her heir. But if there be two sisters, two-third parts of what he shall have shall be theirs; and if there be both brothers and sisters, the male shall have the portion of two females. God maketh this plain to you, that ye err not. And God knoweth all things.

Verse 177. The rule given here supplements the law of inheritance as given in the beginning of Supplement.

Reversion to this law of inheritance just after speaking of Jesus Christ is suggested by the Ahmadi Commentator to have a deeper meaning. No prophet having arisen among Israelites of Jesus Christ the spiritual inheritance must according to this law have gone over to the brother tribe of Ishmael. This would also explain the words in addressed to Moses' God will raise up unto thee a prophet *from midst of thee, out of thy brethren*, like unto thee where the first of the two expressions in italics is thus explained by the other at Moses saw that the Israelites would lose their title to the inheritance of the spiritual kingdom before the advent of the Prophet who was to be his *like*.

SURAH V.

AL MAIDAH (THE TABLE).

Revealed at Medina 120 Verses.

SECTION 1.

Fulfilment of covenants. Obligations relating to pilgrimage. Prohibited food. Perfection of faith announced on appointing Ali to Caliphate after the Prophet. Social relations with non-Muslims.

In the name of God, the Merciful God, the Merciful.

1. O ye believers! Be faithful to your engagements.

You are allowed the flesh of cattle except what may be recited unto you not violating the prohibition against game when ye are in pilgrimage garb (*hurumun*) surely God ordaineth what He pleaseth.

2. O believers! violate not the (sanctity) of the monuments of God (*shaaerallah*), nor the sacred month, nor the offering, nor the badges round their necks, nor those who press on to the sacred house seeking favour from their Lord and his good pleasure in them. But when you leave Haram (after pilgrimage) then take to the chase: and let not ill-will at those who have kept you from the sacred mosque lead you to transgress, but rather be helpful to one another in goodness and piety, but be not helpful in sin and transgression: and fear ye God. Verily, God is severe in punishing!

3. Forbidden to you is that dieth of itself, and blood, and swine's flesh, and all on which other name than that of God hath been invoked, and the strangled, and the killed by a blow, or by a fall, or by goring, and that which hath been eaten by beast of pray, unless ye make it clean (by giving the death-stroke yourselves), and that which hath been sacrificed on the blocks of stone, and (also) that ye make

division of the slain by consulting the arrows. That is impiety in you.

This day, have the infidels despaired of your religion so fear them not, but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you, and have completed My favour upon you : and am pleased to have Islam as a religion for you ;

But whoso without wilful leanings to wrong shall be forced by hunger to transgress, verily, God is, Forgiving, Merciful.

4. They ask thee what is made lawful for them. Say : The good things are allowed to you, and as for the prey of beasts of chase which ye have trained like dogs, teaching them out of what God hath taught you, then eat of what they shall catch for you, and make mention of the name of God over it, and fear God : Verily God is swift of reckoning.

5. This day, *all* good things are legalised to you, and the food of those who have received the Scriptures is (made) lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And ye are permitted to marry chaste women who are believers and chaste women of those who have received the scriptures before you when ye shall have paid them their dowries (*ujurahunna*, remuneration, wages) living chastely with them (*muhsinin*, in lawful wedlock) without fornication and not taking them as secret paramours. And whoever denieth faith his work will come to naught and in the next world he will be of the losers.

Verse 1. 'O ye who believe be faithful to your pledges.' Following the Ahmadi among other versions, we too read this along with the subsequent part as one verse, but it is clearly separate, having not the remotest possible connection with it. True, the rhyme of the verses in the Surah requires this little verse to go into some other one, but why in this particular one where it is most out of place and produces a jarring sense of discordance? According to the Shia traditions the pledges referred to in this verse are those taken by the Prophet at different times from the

people about the succession of Our Lord Ali after him to Imamate or spiritual leadership. (Mulla Sanaullah (Sunni) in his Biography of Our Lord mentions about fifteen occasions on which such pledges were taken from the people, all based on Sunni sources). This may help the reader to understand why it is so misplaced. We will discuss this in note on verse 3 below, where too there is an equally preposterous instance of huddling in of different revelations.

For the prohibition of game to pilgrims in Hajj see next verse and Section 13.

Verse 2. For *Shaerullah* 'the signs or monuments of God' see note on 2: 158 (Vol. 1). They are anything that by close association make a man remember God, His worship &c. *Hady* and *Qalaid* both indicate animals meant for sacrifice, but camels had their necks garlanded hence they were called *qalaid* 'garlanded.'

The latter part of the verse warns the Muslims against acts of violence against the Meccans who had done so much to exterminate the Musalmans, to say nothing of hindering them from the sacred mosque (at Hudaibiyah).

Verse 3. 'This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not and fear Me. This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you and chosen for you Islam as a religion' (Ahmadi Translation). Just consider the extreme importance of the revelation and—the place it is thrust in the Quran. Islam was perfected as a religion and selected above all others to be a religion for mankind for ever on, what?—Directions about lawful or unlawful meat, and prohibition about divining by arrows! In the Musnad of Ahmad 'bn Hambal we read that a Jew once asked Caliph Omar about this verse saying that if there were a similar verse in the Pentateuch they would have made of a great festival of "the day." Omar replied according to its context. What would the Jew have thought? But he was discreet and kept his head on his shoulders. One can imagine something of the sensation the Caliph must have felt when he gave his reply. The humour of it is that the unlawfulness of the flesh of animals not properly killed in the name of God and so forth was nothing new, these meats were always prohibited. See 2: 173.

Now to the true occasion of the revelation. It is useless to cite Shia references; even the opponents of Our Lord could not effectually suppress all reports of so patent a thing. In our note on verse 70

which also relates to the same important event we will say something of the Sunni authorities. Here we confine ourselves with Sunni reports saying precisely that this verse was revealed on this occasion. Hafiz Abu Naim in *Hilyatul Aulia* and Abubecker 'bn Mardwaih in *Manaqib* relate the following from Abu Said Khudri, the companion of the Prophet. "On the day of Ghadeer-i-Khum (while on his way back from Mecca) the Prophet ordered people to sweep clean the land under the trees and the thorns were removed. Then he called Ali and holding his arms raised him aloft so that the whiteness of his (the Prophet's) arm-pits was visible. Then he said 'Whosoever Lord I am, this Ali is his Lord.' Then the people had not yet dispersed when the verse came down 'To-day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and am pleased with Islam for your religion.' The Prophet then said '*Allaho Akbar*' for the perfection of the faith and completion of favour and His being pleased with my Apostleship and Ali's Wilayat' (spiritual leadership)."

This is but the barest skeleton of the story for details of which read histories as *Madarijunnubuwwah*. Ibne Maghazali and Abu Fath Mohammed 'bn Ali 'bn Ibrahim also relate from Abu Huraira that the verse was revealed at Ghadeer-i-Khum on this occasion, the tradition adding that whoever keeps a fast on this day will have a reward of six month's fast. From Mujahid also there is a report to this effect. For these reports see Suyuti's *Durre Mansur* &c. also.

We can now understand the words in their full significance. Before this general proclamation of Our Lord's Imamate Islam was neither perfect as a religion, nor was God wholly pleased with it. The Imamate of Our Lord and the Imams after him is one of the cardinal essentials of faith. Without it Islam was not a perfect religion in any sense of the word. The natural incompetence of the people emerging from the lowest depths of idolatry, the vast masses of people to deal with, the manifold engagements of the Prophet, wars and the like, made it simply out of question for the Prophet to guide the people in the real sense of the word. His work was only begun when he was cut off from the world. It was necessary for him to have behind him a number of successors who could carry on and complete his work of guidance. Yes, complete. Islam is by no means an easy religion to be thoroughly intelligible to, to say nothing of being thoroughly realized by, everybody. It means a number of high spiritual truths which are beyond the reach of the highest intellects of the present day even. These things could not be taught all at once. They were left for the Imams to teach in the fullness of the times.

Even if we suppose that some few Sahabas got to the full truth by constant company of the Prophet they were useless for work after him. Being neither infallible nor inspired, their teachings could not be received with perfect reliance even if they were really above the chance of falling into error, which they certainly were not. So a succession of inspired teachers was necessary—and with it belief in them as such, as a cardinal article of faith. For why, apart from his teachings, is the belief in the Prophet necessary? Because in absence of full knowledge it keeps our mind open to receive any teaching that we might at any time come to be sure that it proceeds from him. The same is the case with the Imams, for they have the same work to do as the Prophet. Islam would be sadly crippled without them. Besides that it is one of the essentials of our spiritual religion to have faith in all who occupy a high rank in the spiritual world. Thus we see that before the wide proclamation of Our Lord's Inamate at Ghadeer-i-Khum Islam could not have been a perfect religion, nor God wholly satisfied with it. In the loose sense of the word, ordinarily taken, religion was perfect from Adam's day.

We can now understand also how "that day" the infidels came to despair about the religion of the Musalmans. The infidels, more especially the hypocrites, had been hoping that as soon as the great overpowering personality of the Prophet is gone their work would become easy enough. They would seize on his kingdom and then delude the people, so raw in faith, back to their infidelity. These hopes were all foiled on this occasion.

We now have to consider how this all-important revelation is so ridiculously misplaced here with directions about meat &c. There are only two alternatives. Either this is due to the collectors or to the Prophet himself. In either case it is too preposterous to be accidental. If it was due to the collectors the intention must be to obscure the significance of the revelation, which was so inconvenient for themselves. If it was done by the Prophet the only reason I can think of is that he probably thought it safer in this obscure connection. If it were placed in a place where its significance would glare out of itself the chances were that verse might have been expunged and lost to the world. Similar considerations help to explain the enigmatic position of the piece commented on in the first verse, which too was revealed and placed first in the Surah to emphasise this all-important obligation.

It is said this part of verse 3 was the last revelation to the Prophet in the Quran. After this no Quranic verse was revealed.

Verse 5. In Qummi's commentary (Tehran Edition) I do not find the word *Alayam* 'this day' in this verse. Is it Printer's devil? or is it a variant reading the word, being omitted in some texts?

This verse has led to a great deal of comment among the jurists of Islam. As for food it must be remembered that a thing which would be unlawful if offered by a Muslim cannot become lawful if offered by a Jew or Christian. Thus the latter often strangle their game, and when they slaughter they do not care to take the name of God upon it. Moreover Trinitarian Christians mean by God something very different from and quite irreconcilable with the conception of God in Islam. For them God is a spiritual organism. One who takes the name of God and means by it such a chimera can hardly be said to take the name of God at all. The case of the Jews is different. Their monotheism is pure, so far as it goes, and they generally take the name of God at the time of slaughter. In a tradition allowing animals slaughtered by them Our Lord Jafar-el-Sadiq recited a Hebrew formula uttered by them at the time of slaughter and translated it for the use of the Musalmans. Moreover it has to be remembered that a thing which is lawful one way may become unlawful another way. Thus wine turned into vinegar becomes lawful, but if the wine was originally made or touched by a polytheist it remains unclean though subsequently turned into vinegar. Now in so far as the use of an unclean thing for food is unlawful the use of this vinegar also becomes unlawful. It is not unlawful absolutely as wine or swine's flesh, which are both unclean and unlawful as food, but still it *is* unlawful. So granting that lawful food cooked by a Jew or Christian may be lawful under this verse, yet it may still be unlawful due to various other reasons. The Tritheism of the Trinitarian Christians apart, they do not scruple about things which we hold to be unclean, and their ways of purification are different. So on this account by itself food &c prepared by Christians and Jews would not be proper to use though some allow it (Jame Abbasi).

As for marrying Jewish or Christian wives Qummi says this is only allowed when they live in Muslim lands and pay *Jazia*. Some think that payment of *Jazia* is immaterial, but the lower temporary form of marriage (*Muta*) is only allowed. This derives some support from the use of the word *ajr* for dowry (see note on 4: 24). Anyway it is best to avoid such alliances.

If what is said here is offensive to any he is requested to consider that, though Musalmans of all sects are certainly Ahle Kitab, we are as severe among ourselves, if any hold an opinion contrary to the plain teaching of the Quran.

The verse is important as making a distinction between unbelievers. Jews and Christians are better than the rest as they believe in some prophets and scriptures. The others do not believe in any.

SECTION 2.

Prayer and its preliminaries. Justice to be adhered to. Wrongful conduct of the Jews.

6. O ye who believe! when ye rise up to prayer, wash your faces, and hands up to the elbow, and wipe (*Wamsahu* and touch) your heads, and your feet up to the ankle-joints. And if ye be polluted then purify yourselves. But if ye are sick, or on a journey, or if one of you come from the place of retirement, or if ye have touched women, and ye find no water, then take clean dust and rub your faces and your hands with it. God desireth not to lay a trouble upon you, but He desireth to purify you, and would that He may complete His favour upon you, so haply ye may be grateful.

7. And remember the favour of God upon you, and His covenant which He hath covenanted with you, when ye said, We have heard and obey, and fear God; verily, God Knoweth all that is in the breasts.

8. O ye who believe! be always upright for God bearing witness with justice: and let not hatred of a people, by any means induce you not to act equitably. Act equitably—that is nearest to piety. And fear ye God: Verily, God is aware of what ye do.

9. God hath promised to those who believe and do good deeds, that for them is pardon and a great reward.

10. While they who believe not and give the lie to Our signs—these shall be companions of Hell fire.

11. O ye who believe! recollect God's favour upon you, when a people had resolved to stretch forth their hand against you, but He kept their hands from you. Fear God then: and on God let the faithful trust.

Verse 6. It is curious that this so plain a verse is persistently misinterpreted by the Sunnis simply to follow an old unjustifiable custom. This will appear from the Ahmadi translation. 'When you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and wipe your heads and (wash) your feet to the ankles.' The word 'wash' second time has to be inserted to make it consonant with the Sunni practice. It is clearly wholly unjustifiable to suppose a word as understood when the sense is clear without it. In the original Arabic instead of the clear *arjulekam* your feet (as the second objective governed by *wamsahu bi*) 'wipe on' as in the reading of four out of seven Qurraa, Hamza, Asim &c. they would read it *arjulatum* and make the distant *Ighsalu* 'wash' jump down to take it as its third object. Needless to say there is not another instance of this in the Quran or any other literature. It is simply absurd. The practice, however, of washing feet in *wuzu* instead of wiping on them was no doubt very ancient, and later jurists found it necessary somehow to make the Qurau conform to it. It is said to have been started by men like Hajjaḡ and Caliph Omar, who probably thought thereby to improve on the practice enjoined in the Quran. But it must be remembered that where discipline is detailed in this way it must be followed literally. There is no question of better or not better in these things. What to speak of washing the feet a man may bathe or wash the whole body before prayers, but it will not be right; he will have to make his ablutions *wuzu* for prayers in the prescribed way. Many Sahabas and Tabein such as Ibne Abbas, Anas Rufaa, Obbad Mazni, Jabir 'bn Auf, Akrama, Shobi held that wiping is meant here (Tafsir Kabir). Some wise men say wiping means washing in a very sparing manner (!) (Mawahib). For full discussion see *Wuzu* published by Islah Press. The latter part of the verse prescribes *Tayammum*, a symbolical ablution when water is not available or cannot be used for fear it may do harm. Both are meant by *falam tajidoo*. Caliph Omar sought to modify this also. He said he would rather not pray at all rather than do this, though it might be so for a month (!) But here his opinion was not accepted. Ammar reminding him of the Prophet's direction he said 'fear God' though he allowed his telling it to others (Bokhari &c).

Tayammum was prescribed in the Jewish religion, but there it was a real complete substitute. Here it is merely symbolical, and only the forehead and hands are touched on or wiped with dust.

Verse 7. Which covenant? The verse again refers to the pledge taken from the people about Our Lord's succession at Ghadeer-i-Khum. In the course of his address he asked the people whether he was not more a master of their souls than themselves. They all replied, "Yea, by

God." Then he said raising Our Lord aloft "Whosoever Lord I am, this Ali is his Lord." Then he made the people salute him as Amirul Mominin 'Commander of the Faithful' and congratulate him for it. Among those who saluted and congratulated were Abubecker and Omar. Writing probably in one of his fits, Gazzali in his *Sirrul Alimain* writes of this and condemns these Caliphs for breaking their pledge as strongly as any Shia would do. The passage is commonly cited by the Shias in their controversy with the Sunnis and can be had anywhere.

It need not be said that the Sunnis have something, however purile, to suggest for the pledge referred to in this verse. They say it refers to the oath of fidelity taken by the Medina people coming to Mecca and inviting the Prophet to come over to their town—the *Bayat* known as *Baiyate Aqaba*. But it was pledge made by a few men only to protect the Prophet against attacks of the Meccans, and it was *more than fulfilled* already at the battle of Beder. Moreover, the pledge then was entered into by the people of their own good will, was not dictated to them as by a Lord or Master, as is implied by the words 'We have heard and we obey.' Even the Ahmadi Commentator is not satisfied with this reference and he suggests instead that taken at Hudaibiyah. But what was that pledge for? To fight the Meccans if the persons sent to negotiate with them at Mecca were murdered. The occasion for the fulfilment of the threat never arose. Also note that this pledge is called here "the favour of God upon you."

Verse 8. This verse requires to be particularly noted. Fair and equitable dealings with our opponents must never be neglected.

Verse 11. The most probable reference is to the Meccans who were threatening and were well prepared to fight the Prophet and his people when the latter warded it off by peace at Hudaibiyah. (Qummi). This made a number of Mussalmans waver in their faith, but the result showed that it was far better than a victory could have achieved. So they were repeatedly reminded about it. The Sunni commentators refer to a number of other occasions in which the enemies of Islam endeavoured to take the life of the Prophet or to exterminate the Musalmans. But the above is the event most probably referred to in this verse.

SECTION 3.

Covenant with Jews. Covenant with Christians. Christian belief in relation to Christ erroneous.

12. And certainly did God take the pledge of the children of Israel and out of them We raised up twelve

leaders and God said, Verily, I am with you. If ye keep up prayer and pay the *zucut* (the prescribed charity), and believe in My Apostles and help them, and lend to God a goodly loan, I will surely put away from you, your evil deeds, and I will bring you into gardens 'neath which the rivers flow ! But whoso of you after this believeth not, he shall assuredly have missed the right path.

13. But for their breaking their covenant We cursed them, and made their hearts hard. They shift the words (of Scripture) from their places, and have forgotten part of what they were admonished with. Thou wilt not cease to discover deceit on theirpart, except in a few of them. But forgive them, and pass it over : Verily God loveth those who act generously !

14. And of those who say, We are Christians, We accepted their covenant. But they forgot a part of what they were admonished with ; wherefore We have stirred up enmity and hatred among them (that shall last) till the Day of the Resurrection, and in the end will God tell them of their doings.

15. O people of the Scriptures, now is Our Apostle come to you clearing up to you much that ye concealed of those Scriptures, and much he passeth over. Indeed hath come to you a light and the clear Book from God.

16. By which God will guide him shall follow after his good pleasure, to paths of peace, and will bring them out of the darkness to the light, by His leave (*be iznihi*) and will guide to the straight path.

17. Assuredly they have gone to infidelity who say, Verily God, He is the Messiah Ibn Maryam (son of Mary) ! Say : Who then could prevail anything against God, if He chose to destroy the Messiah Ibn Maryam, and his mother, and all who are on the earth together ? For to God belongeth the dominion of the Heavens and of the Earth, and of all that is between them ! He createth what He will ; and God hath power over all things.

18. And the Jews and Christians say, Sons are we of God and His beloved. Say: Why then doth He chastise you for your sins? Nay! ye are but a part of the men whom He hath created! He will pardon whom He pleaseth, and chastise whom He pleaseth, and to God belongeth the dominion of the Heavens and of the Earth, and of all between them, and unto Him is the returning (of all).

19. O people of the Book! now hath Our Apostle come to you clearing up things to you after the cessation of Apostles, lest ye should say, There came not to us any giver of good news nor any warner. But now hath a bearer of good news and warner reached you. And God hath power over all things.

Verse 12. It is strange to find Rodwell adding a note here that the Prophet "invented these twelve leaders of tribes" whereas they are mentioned by name in Numbers 1: 5-15, and in the 16th verse they are called 'the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel.' They are also mentioned in the 44th verse as 'princes of Israel being twelve men.' They are different from the twelve men sent, one from each tribe to search out the land of Canaan (in Numbers Chap. 13), so that reference in Sale's and Ahmadi Commentator's note is wrong.

The Judges 'raised up by the Lord' exclusive of those who got into power by their own gallant enterprises would also number about twelve. The history of that period is very dark.

Note that the duties enjoined are pre-eminently Islamic. Judaism may have something to answer for these in their religion, but the object is clearly to impress the Musalmans that they too can expect God to be on their side only so long as they are faithful to every part of this covenant. One important item of this was that they should continue to believe in prophets that were to come after Moses. The corresponding obligation on the Musalmans would be to be faithful to the Holy Imams after the Prophet.

Verse 13. The suggestion is that as God cursed the Israelites for breaking their pledge He would also curse the Musalmans if they are not true to their covenant with the Prophet at Ghadeer-i-Khum, and the same vices that sprang up among the Israelites will come up among them. The direction to pardon them and turn mercifully away was always

observed by the Imams with respect to these people, while at no time does the Prophet appear to have taken that attitude towards the Jews. It is in this sense that Qummi says this verse refers to the breaking of the pledge about Our Lord Ali. The verse has a *side-reference* to it.

Verse 14. For the covenant with the Christians read John 16 : 12, 13 "I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." In the face of such clear words the Christians make of this predicted Paraclete a mere intangible influence. Their chief difficulty is that elsewhere he is said to live with them for ever (John 14 : 17) which the Holy Prophet did not. They do not know that *he does live with us for ever*—in the person of Our Lord the present Imam. The teachings of the Prophet are very clear on this point. He and the Imams are one, of one spiritual substance (*Nur*). So of his pre-existence too.

The prophecy about hatred and enmity getting hold upon them to the Day of Judgement is fulfilled to this time. So long as Christians were a religious sort of community they ran rivers of blood among themselves in their religious dissensions. Now they have outgrown all serious thought for religion, which they have alone as unintelligible, but another kind of prejudice, not less fatal and devastating, has seized upon them, the racial and what I may call the country prejudice, the effect of which we all have seen in the Great War. And so it will be to the end of the world. It is to be noted that this verse is also meant as a warning to the Musalmans. The sectarian hatred among them is notorious

Verse 15. '*You hide*' means both what you suppress or conceal from the people and also what you distort or misrepresent. The '*you*' means both themselves and their forefathers. The reference may be to the prophecies about the Prophet, but it really includes all corruptions of the Scriptures. The verse shows that the Prophet believed the Scriptures to be grossly corrupted, he only set to correct them in matters which were somehow important, and did not care to notice each and every suppression and inaccuracy. He would never have done if he set himself about to do that.

Verse 16. For the use of the expressive word *In* permission here see note on 2 : 97 (Vol 1).

Verse 17. Modern Christians understand the Divinity of Jesus Christ to be something of the nature of a member in a spiritual organism.

(See Gairdner's God as Triune). If God as the second member of the Godhead wishes to do away with the other two, to live by Himself, can He do so or not? If He cannot do so He is finite, limited, not All-powerful and so no God. The Ahmadi Commentator seeks to prove the death of Jesus from this verse, and for this purpose translates *in* (if) by when and the Muzare tense in *yamliku* by the past 'Who could control.' For the former he quite says in the note '*In* sometimes signifies *is* or when (Mgh-LL).' Let the reader who cares verify.

Verse 18. The verse apparently refers to the Christian doctrine of Justification by faith, intensified by the other doctrine of the Atonement of sins by Jesus, and similar hopes held by the Jews though not expressed in such a pronounced manner. What then have they to fear in the Hereafter? Yet the Christians do somehow feel compelled to warn their brethren of punishment in the other life.

SECTION 4.

Moses' command to march on the Holy land. Refusal of the people. The punishment.

20. And when Moses said to his people: O my people! Call to mind the favour of God upon you when He raised up prophets among you, and appointed you kings, and gave you what never had been given before to any in all the worlds.

21. Enter, O my people! the Holy land which God hath destined for you. Turn not on your backs lest ye for them ye will turn back losers.

22. They said, O Moses! therein are men of might. And verily, we can by no means enter it till they be gone forth. But if they go forth from it, then verily will we enter in.

23. Then said two men of those who feared their Lord and to whom God had been gracious, Enter in upon them by the gate: and when ye enter it, ye overcome! And put ye your trust in God if ye be believers.

24. They said, O Moses! We shall never enter it while they remain therein. Go forth thou and thy Lord and fight, we are slaying here.

25. He said, O my Lord, Verily of none am I master but of myself and my brother: Make thou therefore a separation between us and this ungodly people.

26. He said, Verily there the land shall be forbidden them forty years: they shall wander in the earth perplexed. Grieve not thyself therefore for the ungodly people.

Verse 20. "There is no anachronism here. The Israelites are here told that two favours had been bestowed upon them (1) prophets were raised among them (2) they were made kings. The reference need not be to the earlier history of the Israelites, but to their history as dating from the time of Moses, for the advent of Moses had brought about an entire change both in their spiritual and political status. Not only had two prophets, Moses and Aaron already appeared among them, but with the Mosaic law was laid down the basis of a dispensation which gave them promise of numerous prophets appearing among them. And politically they had no doubt already emerged as an independent nation, being masters of themselves and no more slaves of their Egyptian masters. They had acquired kingships, and so the words no doubt contained a clear prophetic reference to their future career as a ruling nation. Spiritual dominance combined with political supremacy was manifestly a favour which was not bestowed upon any of the contemporary nations" (Ahmadi Commentator's note).

Verses 21 to 26. Read the following from Milman's History of the Jews.

"At length the nation arrived on the southern frontier of the promised land (V. 21).....Twelve spies, one from each tribe, are sent out to make observations on the fruitfulness of the land, the character of the inhabitants and the strength of their fortifications. Among these the most distinguished are Caleb of the tribe of Judah and Joshua of EphraimIn one respect their report is most satisfactory: Canaan had undergone vast improvements, since the time when Abraham and Isaac had pastured their flocks in the open and unoccupied plains.....But on the other hand, the intelligence, exaggerated by the fears of the rest of the twelve spies, overwhelms the whole people with terror. Their treasures were guarded by fierce and warlike tribes, not likely to abandon their

native plains without an obstinate bloody conquest. Their cities were strongly fortified, and above all the first enemies they would have to encounter would be men of colossal stature, the descendants of the gigantic people, celebrated in their early national traditions, people before whom they would be as *grasshoppers* (verse 22).....The confidence in the Divine protection gave way at once before their sense of physical inferiority, and the total deficiency of moral courage. '*Back to Egypt*' is the general cry. The brave Joshua and Caleb in vain reprove the general pusillanimity (verse 23); their own lives are in danger; and in bitter disappointment the great law-giver perceives that a people.....inured to slavery from their birth, are not the materials from which he can construct a bold conquering and independent nation (verse 25). The decision is instantly formed.....They are neither to return to Egypt nor assail an easier conquest; but they are condemned to wander for a definite period of forty years, in the barren and dismal regions through which they had marched (verse 26)."

SECTION 5.

Cain's aggression. Warning to Israelites Punishment of those who wage war on the Prophet.

72. And rehearse unto them with truth the story of the sons of Adam when they each offered an offering, but it was accepted from one of them and not accepted from the other. He said: I will certainly kill thee. The (other) said: God accepted only from those who fear (Him).

28. Surely though thou stretch forth thy hand against me to slay me, I will not stretch forth my hand against thee to slay thee. I fear God, the Lord of the worlds.

29. Rather I would that thou shouldst bear my sin and thine own sin, so that thou become an inmate of the Fire; for that is the recompense of the wrong-doers.

30. Then his passion led him to slay his brother: and he slew him; and he thus became one of the losers.

31. Then God sent a raven which scratched upon the ground, to shew him how he might hide the unsightliness of

his brother. He said: O Woe is me! Am I too weak to become like this raven, and to hide away the unsightliness of my brother? And he became one of those who feel ashamed.

32 Because of this have We ordained to the children of Israel that he who slayeth anyone, unless it be a person guilty of man-slaughter, or of spreading mischief in the land, shall be as though he had slain all mankind; but that he who saveth a life, shall be as though he had saved all mankind alive. And certainly Our Apostles came to them with clear evidences; yet, verily, (even) after this most of them have gone about committing excesses in the land.

33. The recompense of those who war against God and His Apostle, and go about spreading mischief in the land is naught but that they be slain or crucified, or have their (alternate) hands and feet cut off, or be banished from the land. This their disgrace in this world, and in the next a great torment shall be theirs.

34. Except those who repent before you have them in your power; for know that God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Verse 27. The reference is to the story of Abel and Cain. See Gen. 4: 3-12.

Verse 29. The murderer has all the sins (if any) of the murdered man borne on himself. Also if he is a righteous man and particularly a sinless prophet, as Abel was, he bears the sins of those who might have been guided by him or profited by his example whether those living at the time or to come to the end of the world. So also he bears the sin of cutting of his posterity—an amount calculable by God only. And a prophet is representative of all his people—at least we are taught this in the case of Our Holy Prophet—the sins of the people are laid at his door and are then pardoned on his account. This is the magnitude of *ismi* 'my sin.'

It is not necessary to suppose that Abel said he wanted his brother to suffer all this. This may be the upshot of what he warned his brother with. So in Surah 76:9 we are told the words were not actually spoken by Our Lord but this was the underlying current of their thoughts.

Verse 31. Here the Quran corrects the story in Talmud (R. Eliezer Puke C. 20) which makes the raven appear to instruct Adam. Surely Adam who was 'taught the names of all things' (see note on 2 : 31) could not be so ignorant.

Verse 32. 'On account of that.' On account of what? On account of this that as Abel had already warned his brother that his murder was equivalent to the murder of all mankind (verse 29) and this may be nearly so in the case of the wanton murder of the merest of God's creatures.

The question now arises why it is said that this was laid down for the children of Israel. For two reasons. The first is that Israelites being favoured with a revealed religion were the first to realize the gravity of murder in this light. It cannot be the same for the barbarians or other low-cultured people. The second is that following the practices of Cain and practically joining themselves up with him spiritually they practically took upon their heads the sin of Cain without thereby relieving him of it. So Our Lord Jesus holds them guilty for "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias" (Matt 23 : 35). So too in some of our traditions all innocent blood from the beginning of life on earth is laid at the door of some principal male-factors in our community.

See also Introduction where it is said that the connection which appears in the words 'On account of that' may be found in some thoughts passing in the mind of the Prophet, possibly a remembrance of the Jewish inference of this law from the story of Cain's murder in Genesis. The expressive use of the plural for blood in Gen. 4 : 10 to signify the posterity of Abel that was cut off is perfectly right though it is not after all the whole of the truth.

We thus see that the contention of the critics (Gieger, Noeldeke &c.) that this verse shows slovenly borrowing from the Targum of Okenalos is foolish in the extreme.

Verse 33. Those wage war against God and in this kill and plunder are to be killed or crucified, those that do not plunder, but kill only are to be killed, those that plunder only without killing are to have their opposite hands and feet cut off. And those who simply wage war without doing anything of these injuries are to be banished.

Verse 34. Those who repent of themselves before you have them in your power are to be pardoned and their conduct in future observed.

SECTION 6.

Punishment of the apponents, punishment for the thief. Hypocrites and Jews act as spies

35. O ye who believe ! fear God and seek the means of approach (*wasilah*) to His presence and strive hard (*jahidoo*) in His way that haply ye may prosper (*tuflihoon*).

36. Surely those who are infidels—if they had all that is in earth, and the like of it with it to make it their ransom from the torment on the Day of Resurrection, it shall not be accepted from them ! And a doleful torment there shall be for them.

37. Fain would they come forth from the Fire ; but forth from it they shall not come : and a lasting torment shall be theirs.

38. As to the thief, whether man or woman, cut ye off their (right) hands, in recompense for what they have earned—a penalty serving for example (*Nakalan*) from God. And God is Mighty, Wise.

39. But whoever shall turn to God after his wickedness and amend, Verily God will be turned to him : surely God is Forgiving, Merciful.

40. Knowest thou not that the kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth is God's ? He chastiseth whom He willeth and to whom He willeth He forgiveth. And God hath power over all things.

41. O Apostle ! let not those grieve thee who run eagerly after infidelity—of the folk who say with their mouths, We believe, but whose hearts believe not,—and from among those who are Jews—greedy eavesdroppers for falsehood, eavesdroppers for other folk who have come not to thee. They shift the words after (the fixing of) their

places, (and) say, If this be brought to you, receive it; but if this be not brought to you, then beware of it. Now for him whom God would have (fall into) temptation (*Fitnah*) thou canst in no wise prevail with God! They are those whose hearts God does not will to purify. For them is disgrace in this world, and in the next a great punishment.

42. Greedy eavesdroppers for falsehood and greedy devourers of the forbidden. If, therefore, they have recourse to thee, then judge between them, or turn aside from them. If thou turn aside from them, then can they have no power to injure thee. But if thou judge, then judge between them with equity, Verily God loveth those who deal equitably.

43. But how shall they make thee their judge, since they have already the Torah, in which is the judgement of God, but they turn away from it thereafter, and they are (surely) not believers.

Verse 35. Wasila which may be rightly translated a *means of* or, better still, a *means of approach*, is properly a man of position who can introduce a man in humble circumstances to a king or other high dignity to whose presence he could not otherwise have any access. In the case of God it is clear it can be nothing but the Holy prophets and Imams. The Prophet used to say that when you pray for me pray for my *wasilaship*, though *from our point of view* this prayer is mostly only an expression of the harmony of our wishes with the Will of God, and is meant chiefly to recount to our good. As a matter of fact there can be no better *wasila* to God than that which He set up Himself. If He wished He could guide men by inspiring each and every man individually. But in His Infinite Wisdom He did not see it fit to do so. He appointed emissaries to express His Will to His creation. Even in creation He does not work all Himself, but leaves it, all or nearly all, to be done by these holy agents. These are in fact the intermediaries between God and His creation, in fact a *wasila* used by God to approach His creation, He being too high above it. What, then, can the creatures do to go up to Him, but to approach Him through these Divine intermediaries?

Good works may be said to be an excellent means of approach to God, but apart from the incapacity of mankind to attain to perfection in

virtue without active guidance (spiritual help explained in note to 1:5 and 2:2) which comes only through these sources, it is sufficient to say that good works are good only so far as they are in a spirit of harmony to the design of the creation. If one deliberately passes it over as of no account and seeks to make path for himself, he can see that his spirit is not good, though outwardly his actions may be.

Needless to say, it is only love that can unite our souls spiritually to these holy *Wasilas* so that they can be used as a means of approach to God.

It may appear to some that this view tends to give human nature a very low position, but they must know that greatness lies in the way of humility and submission, and pride and presumption leads to nothing but degradation and disgrace. Do they not see that he who was the *Wasila* asked us to pray for his *wasilaship* before God? It no doubt serves to raise his position in the Infinite Grace and Mercy of God.

Verse 38. In the case of crimes the principle of Islam seems to be that the more common and ordinary in sight a crime is the more serious notice Islam takes of it. While in the case of murder no special severity is enjoined in punishment in the case of theft, as in the case of adultery, the punishments prescribed are such as to make the hair stand erect to think of them. This with a twofold purpose, one that 'a few hangings is the best policeman,' and the other and more important one that 'by association the punishments prescribed make the gravity of the crimes home to the people and they begin to get a horror of the crime in itself. When people are punished lightly they come to think the crime itself to be a light one.' The two together make a reform in society which is simply unimaginable in the civilized governments that have been implanted on us from the West. Compare the moral condition of India under the British rule with that of the barbarian Arabia under the tyrannical Ibn Saud and that of Persia under Riza Shah. It is quite a fact that there was much less crime under the rude governments of old times than under the present civilized ones. It is said that in the days of Omar (12 years' reign) there were only three cases of theft in the whole vast empire. In Europe itself the decrease in low crimes as thefts, house-breaking &c is due to the capital punishment, (attended sometimes with horrible tortures) that was formerly awarded for felony. We see no reason whatever to try to soften down the law in this verse as the Ahmadi Commentator tries to do in his usual fallacious manner.

Verse 39. This means simply that God will not punish in the Hereafter. His repentance does not supersede the execution of the law here, nor excuse him from making restitution. If he repents and makes restitution of his own accord before he is found out he may be pardoned here as well.

41. This and the following verses up to verse 50 relate to the disputes of the Jews of Bani Nazir and Bani Quraiza in which the former sought the Prophet to support them in their unjust dealings with the latter. The former being the stronger of the two clans and being in alliance of the powerful Medina Chief Abdullah' bn Obay had forced the latter (Bani Quraiza) to sign a contract whereby if a man of Bani Nazir tribe killed a man of Bani Quraiza he would not be killed in *Qisas* but would pay half the blood-wit and would be paraded on a camel with his face towards the tail. On the other hand if one of the Bani Quraiza killed one of Bani Nazir he would pay the full blood-wit and also be killed for his act. So things went on till the Prophet came to Medina, and large numbers of the people having embraced Islam, the power of the Jews was much weakened. Now it happened that a man of Bani Quraiza killed a man of Bani Nazir, and the latter demanding the offender to be put to death along with the blood-wit, the former protested that it was against the law of Torah, they could have either the murderer or the blood-wit. The quarrel not ending, they suggested that the Prophet may be asked to decide the matter, whereupon the Bani Nazir approached their ally Abdullah 'bn Obay requesting him to induce the Prophet to maintain the validity of the contract. He consented, and went with some Jews to hear the conversation, advising them not to accept the arbitration of the Prophet in case he does not agree. It was on this occasion that this verse was revealed. If you are given this, that is, if the Prophet accedes to your wishes.

Verse 43. How can they whole-heartedly submit to his judgement when they are not prepared to submit to their own Scriptures which, (however corrupted it might be), is at least believed in by them, and in this case does contain the rightful command of God. There is nothing here which can show that the Scriptures as in the hands of the people were held to be perfectly genuine as the word of God.

SECTION 7.

The Torah and its evidence. The Gospel and its evidence. The Quran fulfils their promises, and therefore it must now be followed.

44. Verily we have sent down the Law (Taurat) wherein is guidance and light. By it did the prophets who submitted (to God) (*Aslamu*) judge for the Jews, as also did the divines (*Rubaniyun*) and the doctors, (*Ahbar*) as they were made the keepers of the Book of God, and the witnesses thereof. Therefore, fear not men but fear Me; and barter not away My signs for a mean price! And whoso will not judge by what God hath sent down, these then are the infidels.

45. And therein have We prescribed for them that life is for life, and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for wounds (there shall be) retaliation. But he who shall remit it in charity shall have therein the expiation (of his sin); and whoso shall not judge by what God hath sent down—these then are the wrong-doers.

46. And We made to follow in their footsteps Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming the law which was before him: and We gave him the Evangel in which is guidance and light, and confirmatory of the preceding Law and a guidance and admonition for the God-fearing.

47. And let the people of the Evangel judge according to what hath God sent down therein. And whoso will not judge by what God hath sent down—these then are the transgressors (*fasiqun*).

48. And to thee We have sent down the Book with truth, confirmatory of what is before it of the Book and a guardian over it. Judge, therefore, between them by what God hath sent down, and follow not their desires against the truth which hath come unto thee. For everyone of you have We appointed a law and an open way. And if God had pleased He had surely made you all one people; but that He would test you by what He hath given to each. Be emulous,

then, in hastening to good deeds. To God shall be your returning and He will tell you about all in which ye are differing.

49. And that do thou judge between them by what God hath sent down, and follow not their desires; and be on thy guard against them lest they beguile thee from something of what God hath sent down to thee; and if they turn back, then know thou that God willeth to afflict them for some of their sins; for truly many of the men are impious.

50. Desire they, therefore, the judgement of the times of (pagau) ignorance? But what better judge can there be than God, for a people of assured faith.

Verse 44. *Aslamu* (were Muslims lit. submitted themselves) is here apparently used in contrast to *Hadu* (those who Jndaised). The meaning is that, however corrupt the Jews' religion and Scriptures might have been, the prophets when they judged in their cases judged strictly according to the original law of Moses. So also did the doctors and priests according to "what they were required to keep in mind from the Book of God." That is, though the Books as they were might be grossly corrupt, they remembered the substance of the essential things that were genuine and were witnesses of the truth of this substance. Thus, far from proving the integrity of the Scriptures as they were in the hands of the people, the passage really shows that the doctors knew that there was a mass of unreliable stuff out of which they selected, by critical knowledge or otherwise, that which was really the genuine Mosaic Law and used it to pass judgements in cases that came up before them. If the Books, genuine and complete, were in everybody's hands, why were the great doctors required to retain memory of *something* from it and be witnesses thereof? a testimony to the genuineness of that part, implying that they could not vouchsafe for the rest. *Istahfizu* (from *hifz*, to keep safe or keep in memory).

Verse 45. The Law that was laid for them in the Torah was perfect equity in retaliation, and so unlawful request of Bani Nazir must be rejected. The Law is found in the Book of Numbers and is very famous.

Verse 46. 'And We sent after them in their footsteps (*ala asarihim*) Jesus son of Mary.' This phrase clearly shows that the Prophet knew that there was a long interval of time between Moses and Jesus. The Law of Moses continued to be followed by a number of prophets after

him and after them by doctors and priests (verse 44) and then Jesus appeared. This ought to silence those who say that the Prophet apparently confounded Mary, mother of Moses with Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron as she is mentioned in one place as the sister of Harun (19: 29). It is time that such foolish criticisms were a thing of the past.

Like the Quran the Gospel is also said to be a verifier of Torah though it introduces a number of changes. In fact Jesus is said to have abrogated much of the *Shariat* (Law) of Moses (see 3: 49). By verification is meant only corroboration of general principles and broad doctrines of faith as the Unity of God and equitable dealing with men or the declaration of one prophet of the truth of those who preceded him and the fulfilment of their prophecies regarding himself.

Verse 47. This shows that the true Injil of Jesus did contain commandments which the Christians should follow in their causes—contrary to the notion of the Christians of the present day who think Jesus came to dispense with Law altogether, and leave men to frame laws for themselves.

Verse 48. 'Guardian over it.' See Introduction. Chap. X.

SECTION 8.

Jews and Christians as enemies. Apostates do not count. Duty of all to take the Prophet and Ali as spiritual guardians.

51. O ye who believe! take not the Jews or Christians as friends (*Auliya*). They are friends one of the other. If anyone of you taketh them for his friends, he surely is one of them! Verily God not guideth not an iniquitous people.

52. So shalt thou see those who have disease in heart hastening towards them, saying, We fear lest a change of fortune befall us. But belike God will bring about a victory or some hap from before Himself; then will they be regretting for what they hid in their souls.

53. Then will the faithful say, What! are these they who swore, by their most solemn oath, that they were of a surety with you? Vain shall be their works; and they shall turn out losers.

54. O ye who believe! should any of you turn from His religion, God will then raise up a people loved by Him, and loving Him, lowly before the faithful, proud in face of the infidels. Thy will strive hard in the cause of God, and will not fear the blaming of the blamer. This is the grace of God! On whom He will bestow it! And God is Vast, Omniscient!

55. Verily, your guardian is only God and His Apostle, and those who believe, thou who daily observe prayer, and pay the *Zakat* (charity of obligation), while they are bowing down in prayer.

56. And whoso take God and His Apostle, and those who believe for guardians, these (truly are the people of God), and verily the people of God they shall be triumphant.

Verse 51. *Aulia* is plural of *wali* which may be rendered, but is really much more than, a friend in the common sense of the word. The word is in common use for a guardian, and even a Lord or Master, the idea of supporter or protector being the chief element in the latter as well. In the sense of friend it means a very true and sincere friend whose support and assistance can always be depended upon, and from whom there can be no fear of deceiving and misleading in any case or matter whatever. It is in this sense of a fast, perfectly reliable friend that we are forbidden to take anyone not belonging to our religion for our friend.

The direction is naturally much resented by critics of Islam, who see in it a spirit of inextinguishable intolerance. In reply it is not necessary to refer, as the Ahmadi Commentator does to the war conditions of early Islam when "all non-believers, whatever their own differences had made common cause against Islam" and the Musalmans could "not expect help or friendship from any party of them whether Jews, Christians or idolators." "When two nations are at war, an individual of one nation having friendly relations with the enemy nation is treated as an enemy." All this goes without saying, but, however offensive it may appear to some, the direction applies equally to friendship among individuals and equally in times of peace. But a moment's reflection will show that if sincerity means anything and has any value it cannot be otherwise than it is. I have often considered this in my own case. I find, to my embar-

rassment, that there are some Sunnis, Hindus and Christians whom I love with an intensity that I am capable of, perhaps,—certainly as much as any of my dearest friends among my co-religionists. Surely I cannot help doing so, and you may say that in this case I am better than my religion. Yet just consider what this means. Here is a man I say I love. As a Musalman I am sure that sometime later he is to be put in woes which I cannot well imagine even. At least I am sure that he is to be prevented from any shadow of bliss in the Hereafter. I know that by suitable advice I may prevent this, but I do nothing simply fearing that in this attempt his feelings may be injured and our earthly relations may become strained. Say if this is love? There are only two alternatives. Either I do not sincerely love him, am not his sincere friend, or I do not seriously believe in my religion. As I have said I frequently think of this and get embarrassed; either of the two things are sufficient to make one shudder: yet probably both are true. Do you think Islam is going to approve of this? One thing might be said, suppose a man does all he can and fails, what then? I say it is impossible to fail unless the other man is persistent in his aversion and refuses to listen at all—and in such a case is it possible to continue to love one's son even.?

From the above there will be little difficulty in understanding how it is that "Whoever loves them is (really) one of them." It could not be otherwise, he surely does not believe what his religion teaches him about his friend and somehow hopes for his salvation in spite of his religion, or else he does not seriously think of the Hereafter at all, which too means that he is a sort of infidel practically. But the indictment in the Quran is based on a great spiritual truth which has repeatedly been referred to in these pages. Love as a real tie binds them so fast that it is difficult to sever one from the other. If a man loves a saint he is sure to partake something of the heavenly bliss that is in store for him. The opposite in the case of attachment to the iniquitous, God forbid. All the importance that the Shia religion attaches to *Tawalla* (love) and *Tabarra* (aversion) (for those who deserve it) is based on this principle. It is not merely the holiest souls that are to be loved, or the most devilish souls that are to be hated. It has its weight in everybody's case. Somebody once told the Prophet that though not much devoted to prayer himself he loved those who prayed. The Prophet replied saying that he who loves a people is among them.

So it will appear that no apology is needed for this verse if by love is meant true, sincere love. For ordinary dealings with unbelievers and the attitude of the heart towards them the following verse is clear "God

does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you *on account of (your) religion* and have not driven you forth from your homes that you show them kindness and deal with them justly; Surely God loves those who are just. God *only* forbids you respecting those who have made war upon you *on account of your religion* and drove you forth from your homes, and backed up (others) in your expulsion; that you make friends with them; those are the unjust." (Surah 60 : 8, 9). The words in *italics* are important and should be well considered.

Verse 52. These were the hypocrites. The verse contains a clear prophecy of the triumph of Islam.

Verse 53. This will be in the Hereafter, when the hypocrites will be clearly distinguished from the true believers, and their good deeds, virtues even, will be nullified and avail them nothing. *Habitat Aamalalum* is only spoken of true, really virtuous deeds.

Verse 54. The verse says that even if all the Musalmans turn away from their religion, it does not matter in the least to God. God will raise a people who love Him and whom He loves; and it is these and these alone that count in the sight of God. In its full application the verse refers to the men who will be with our Lord, the present Imam, when he appears. By that time, nearly all the Musalmans will have gone to infidelity.

The Sunni commentators say that there is a prophetic reference in this verse to the wave of apostacy that had come upon the country about the close of the Prophet's life and immediately after his death. Three tribes had come to believe in false prophets, Moseilima, Zul Himar, Toleiha—all in Prophet's lifetime. Ten tribes fell off in Abubecker's Caliphate, refusing to pay *Zacat* to him, and possibly seeking to be free in the matter of religion. These also were indiscriminately held to be apostates, and severely dealt with by Abubecker contrary to the general opinion of the Sahabas. The commentators say that the meaning of the verse is that whenever there is any such apostacy there will be an equally large, or possibly large acquisition to the pale of Islam. They are not agreed as to the persons who fulfilled this other part of the prophecy. Some will have them to be the inhabitants of Yemen, and others the Persians; the authority of the Prophet being vouched for both opinions. Others suppose them to be 2000 of the tribe of Al-Nakha (who dwelt in Yemen), 5000 of those of Kindah and Bajilah, and 3000 of unknown descent (Beizawi, Siraj &c.). Clearly it is too much to say that whenever there is apostacy the loss will be made good by new converts, for there are numerous traditions to the effect that as time goes on apostacy (virtual

apostacy at least) will increase, and at the time that Our Lord the Mahdi of Islam will appear there will be but few true believers. Moreover all new converts cannot be men of the high qualities described in the verse, to say nothing of being 'beloved of God' for which see 3 : 31 Note. The words of God must be not taken in a loose sense.

The Ahmadi Commentator takes an apparently more plausible view. He says the reference here is to Abubecker's Caliphate as he suppressed this general rising of the people and "thus Abubecker and his helpers and advisers are the people who are here spoken of as loving Allah and being His beloved ones." But alas! the less said about this the better. Suffice it to say that were this in the slightest way reasonable the Sunni commentators would not have been slow to say so. Were it so this verse would have been produced to silence the many Sahabas who opposed the slaughter of these raw converts and advocated milder measures. Men like the rapacious, adulterous Khalid, whom Omar would have seen put to death, can on no account be called one beloved of God. It was he who led Abubecker's armies in these campaigns. The feindish excesses of these people at the command of the Caliph are simply unspeakable. They may be read in Tabari and other histories.

In fact the apostacy of so many tribes immediately on the death of the Prophet does little credit to the spread of Islam in his days. Allama Shustri has shown from Sunni accounts themselves that except in the case of persons deluded by false prophets, all so-called cases of apostacy were only those of men who denied Abubecker's right to be Caliph and refused to pay *Zacat* to his men. See his Majlis. Art Banu Hanif.

Verse 55. Nearly all commentators, including the greatest Sunni ones, write traditions to the effect that this verse was revealed on Our Lord's giving away a ring to a beggar while he was in prayer. The man had come to the Prophet's Mosque when Our Lord was praying; he appealed for charity to those present, but no one was moved. Eventually the man was going away disappointed when Our Lord pointed his finger to him while he was bowing, and the man came and took away the ring from his finger. (Suyuti, Durre Mansur &c).

The Sunnis who do not like to accept the consequences which the wording of the verse read in connection with this occasion of the revelation would impose upon use them all sorts of arguments to make the story appear improbable. One favourite one is that in his prayers Our Lord would be so absorbed in devotion that he could not hear the words of the

beggar (Razi). To which a controversialist gave the biting reply: any-way it was better than being so absorbed with money matters in prayer as not to read anything whatever in it referring to stories told in Sunni accounts of Caliph Omar's prayers (Kanzul Ummal &c). It is not seen that such absorption as would make one incapable of attending to duties as they come on is a weakness, and is not at all desirable. The very structure of prayer which requires a series of practices in different postures is inconsistent with it. Those who are better of absorption in prayer know that in it a stage comes which is described in Hadis Qudsi as follows 'My servant does cease to approach Me in his voluntary prayers till I become the eye wherewith he sees, the ear wherewith he hears' &c. His mind becomes in perfect unison with God. Whatever comes to God (as the imploring of the man in this case) comes to him. He becomes practically all-seeing, all-hearing.

Another attempt at objection is that "The *Zacat*, or the poor-rate, was paid into the Treasury, the Baitul Mal, and was appropriated to several heads." So says the Ahmadi Commentator. He probably forgets that the Baitul Mal did not exist in Prophet's days, it was started by Omar, and there it was mainly the revenues and the plunders of wars that were collected. All the world knows that everyone is free to pay his *Zacat* to any deserving man, and it is binding on him to do so whether there is a Muslim State to demand and use it or not. It is true that the Prophet had engaged persons to collect *Zacat* from people in their neighbourhood, but this was only a convenient method adopted to have it used in a systematical way and in more profitable matters. But this no way meant that people could not dispense their *Zacat* on their own account. It was Abubecker who fought people for their not making over their *Zacat* to him and treated them as apostates.

Now for the meaning of the verse. It is clear that word *Wali* is here used more in the sense of Lord than in the sense of friend (see note on verse 51 above). The Prophet and the faithful described are *Wali* in the same sense as God is *Wali*. At the lowest it may be taken as guardian. This is further accentuated by the use of the word only '*innama*' which shows that no others are *Wali* in the sense meant. Also the word *Wali* is purposely kept in the singular to show that the *Waliship* of God and His Prophet and these faithful is essentially one—there is not the least difference between them. Also the next verse states that the people who take these as *Wali* become thereby the people or the army of God so that the ordinary faithful are different from the *allazina amanu* 'those who believe' in that and this verse. Taking all this in the light of the

occasion of the revelation, which is endorsed even by Sunni traditionists, it is clear that the spiritual Lordship of Our Lord Ali and the Imams after him (who are believed to have done the same) is as important to acknowledge as that of the Prophet and God Himself.

May I ask what the Ahmadi Commentator means when he says 'The next verse makes it clear that the whole body of the believers is meant here, for they are called the party of Allah who shall be triumphant and evidently it was the Muslim community as a whole that was triumphant, and not Ali alone?' Siraj says clearly that the construction is that those who take these as guardians are the people of God, and it is these people of God who will be triumphant

Verse 56. The triumph here spoken of is the triumph of religion, culture, civilization, not that of barbaric force in which the Mongols and Tartars far surpassed them. Even in the matter of earthly sovereignty it can easily be seen that, like all the brains in the Islamic world, all the sovereigns of Islam have been Shias, practically speaking, or virtually so. The Shia tendencies of these as a rule is notorious. See *Majalis &c.*

SECTION 9.

The mockers and their fault-finding. Hypocritical Jews and their mischiefs. They are enjoined to act up to their own Scriptures.

57. O ye who believe! take not for guardians those who take your religion for a mockery and a joke, from among those who were given the Scriptures before you and the unbelievers; and fear God if ye are believers.

58. And when ye call to prayer they make of it a mockery and a joke. This because they are a people who understand not.

59. Say: O people of the Book! do ye condemn us for aught but that we believe in God, and in what God hath sent down to us, and in what He hath sent down before, and that most of you are impious.

60. Say: Shall I tell you of one meriting a worse retribution with God? He whom God hath cursed and over whom He hath been angry—and of whom hath He made into apes and swine; and he who worshipped the devil

Tugout, these are in a worse plight and have gone far astray from straight path !

61. And when they came to you they said, We believe ; but infidels they came in unto you, and infidels they went forth ! and God well knoweth what they were hiding (in their hearts).

62. Many of them shalt thou see hastening together to wickedness and malice, and their eating of what is unlawfully acquired. Certainly evil is what they have been doing.

63. How is it that their divines and doctors have not forbidden their uttering wickedness, and their swallowing of what is unlawfully obtained ? Evil indeed is what they work.

64. And the Jews say, The hand of God, is chained up. May their own hands be chained up—and cursed for what they say. Nay ! Wide open are both His hands ! He giveth as He pleaseth. That which hath been sent down to thee from thy Lord will surely increase in many of them their rebellion and unbelief ; and We have cast enmity and hatred between them (that shall last) till the Day of the Resurrection. So oft as they kindle a fire for war God doth put it out ! and they run about spreading mischief in the land, but God loveth not the mischief makers.

65. And if the People of the Book had believed and feared (God) We would surely have put away their sins from them, and bring them into gardens of delight.

66. And if they had kept up the law and the Evangel, and what hath been sent down to them from their Lord, they would surely have had their fill of good things from above them and from beneath their feet. Among them are a people who are moderate ; but many of them ! how evil their doings.

Verse 57. Such directions seem hardly to be called for at all. But in the early days of Islam they were called for—and were disregarded.

Even at the present day they require to be impressed. Think of the Musalmans taking Swami Shraddhanand to the pulpit at the mosque of Delhi! People who by long tradition get used to have a sort of national pride in the pagan Ommyeds can do anything.

Verse 60. For the turning of men into apes see note on 2:65. As to swine it is said some Christians were so metamorphosed; all died soon after the punishment. 'Brethren of apes and swines' was a term of reproach frequently used for the Jews by early Musalmans, showing that there was surely some legend about it which was generally accepted. The worship of *T'agout* may refer to their necromancy.

Verse 62. *Suht* is any income or property which is forbidden, not lawful to be gained. It is a very strong word. May refer to their practice of taking usury, or the income they had by reciting vain Talmudic stories to the people.

Verse 63. Rodwell and Sale have both translated *lau la* as unless (instead of why not) which is considered grammatically incorrect here. One cannot but agree with the feeling of the author of *Mawahib* when he notes here that in accordance with the Prophet's prophecy all the evils for which the Jews are condemned in these strong words have appeared and are rife among the Musalmans, and our doctors and priests do nothing, practically, to improve our moral condition.

Verse 64. The words "The hand of God is, tied up," that is, he is become niggardly and close-fisted, are attributed to Phineas 'bn Azura; he said this when the Jews were much impoverished by dearth, and other Jews instead of reproving him expressed their approbation of what he said. So the commentators. But it may be as the Ahmadi Commentator says, "This reference was levelled at an objection against the raising of subscriptions for the defence of the Muslim community; the absurd idea of the taunting Jews being that a cause which was represented as divine, or the cause of truth, should not stand in need of funds raised by the ordinary methods of subscription, Cf. 3:180 'Allah is poor and we are rich'....."

Verse 68. By *iqamat* or keeping of the Torah and the Gospel is meant their preserving these Books in the right state, and acting up to them.

SECTION 10.

The Lordship of Ali to be proclaimed. Followers of the Bible do not act up to it. Christian errors.

67. O Apostle! deliver what hath been revealed to thee from thy Lord: for if thou did not do it, thou hast not delivered His message at all, and God will protect thee from men: verily, God guideth not an believing people.

68. Say: O People of the Book! ye have no ground to stand on, until ye observe the Law and the Evangel, and that which hath been sent down to you from your Lord. And what hath been sent down to thee from thy Lord will certainly increase the perversity and unbelief of many of them; wherefore grieve not thou over an unbelieving people.

69. Verily, they who believe, and the Jews, and the Sabeites, and the Christians—whoever of them believeth in God, and in the last day, and doth what is right, on them shall come no fear, neither shall they be put to grief.

70. Verily We accepted the covenant of the children of Israel, and sent Apostles to them. So oft as an Apostle come to them with that for which they had no desire, some they treated as liars, and some they slay.

71. And they reckoned that no trying situation (*Fitnah*) would arise: so they become blind and deaf! Then was God turned unto them: then many of them became blind and deaf again! but God is well seeing what they do.

72. Surely they go to infidelity who say, God is the Messiah, son of Mary, whereas the Messiah said, O children of Israel! worship God, my Lord and your Lord. Verily whoever joineth aught with God then surely God hath forbidden for him the Garden, and his abode shall be the Fire; and the iniquitous shall have no helpers.

73. They surely are infidels who say, God is the third of three: for there is no God but one God: and if they refrain not from what they say, a painful torment shall come to such of them as believe not.

74. Will they not, therefore, be turned unto God, and ask pardon of Him? for God is Forgiving, Merciful!

75. The Messiah, son of Mary, was no other than an Apostle; other Apostles have been before him; and his mother was a truthful woman: they both ate food. Behold! how We make clear the signs for them, and then observe which way they are going away to.

76. Say: Will ye worship, beside God, that which can neither hurt nor help you? While God! Heareth, Knoweth all.

77. Say O People of the Book! Outstep not bounds of truth in your religion; neither follow the vanities of those who went astray before and led many astray, and have themselves gone astray from the straight path.

Verse 67. In spite of their traditions the Sunni commentators ordinarily find it convenient to say that this verse means simply that the Prophet must convey *all* that has been revealed to him, and if he withholds any portion of it he has practically failed to fulfil the charge that is entrusted to him. The meaning appears very feasible, only it requires in the insertion of the little word '*all*' and then it looks much like a truism. The fact is that this meaning is just the reverse of the truth. The Prophet was given much highly spiritual and other important teaching in *Hadees Qudsi* which he was required not to give out publicly as the masses, the raw converts, were not able to receive, and assimilate it and there was fear of their turning away from Islam altogether. He reserved this teaching for the choicest of his Sahabas who had the capacity of head and heart that was requisite for it (see Introduction Chap. IV). There was much of discretion given to the Prophet in these matters and he was always careful to exercise it. The verse clearly speaks of some order which the Prophet had hitherto refrained from giving out *publicly*, because

of some kind of fear from the people, but which was so important that if he did not publicly proclaim that, all his mission would practically come to nothing. It is not possible to conceive even of any command of such importance (and so attended with fears) except that which related to the continuance of his work after him.

Without further preamble we give the traditions confining ourselves to the Sunni traditions. The long and short of these traditions (they cannot be even summarised here) is what is said in note to verse 3 above. Immediately on the revelation of this verse (which was when the Prophet was returning with his numerous followers from the last pilgrimage, the Prophet stopped at Ghadeer-i-Khum and proclaimed Our Ali as the Lord of all believers in the following words. "Whosoever Lord (*Maula*) I am this Ali is his Lord (*Maula*)," (Mishkat). The following are references merely. Ibn Abi Hatam, Ibn Mardwaih, Ibn Asakir from Abu Said Khudri (Durre Mansur, Fathul Bayan Naishapuri, Wahidi, Abn Nuaim &c). Tafsir-i-Kabir and Saalabi from Ibn Abbas and Bara 'bn Azib, Hamwini from Abu Hurairah. And so on and so forth.

Suyuti also cites from Ibn Masud that in the days of the Prophet they used to read this verse thus 'O Prophet convey to the people what is revealed to thee from thy Lord that Ali is the Lord of the Faithful and if thou dost not do so thou hast not delivered His message and God will protect thee from the people.

As to the memorable action taken by the Prophet at Ghadeer-i-Khum the authorities are simply innumerable. The celebrated historian Tabari collected them in a book which he named Kitabul Wilayat, about which the great critic Zahabi says that when he looked at the book he was thunderstruck at the number of chains through which it has come to be recorded. After him Ibn Uqda wrote a book named Hadisul Wilayat entirely devoted to this event, in which he cites the reports of no less than 120 Sahabas to this effect; 101 Sahabas by name, the rest are unnamed. Of the named Sahabas we mention only a few—those most well-known, and first of all those from whom the narration of such a thing would be least expected—Abubecker, Omar, Othman, Talha Zobeir, Abdul Rahman 'bn Auf, Saad 'bn Abi Waqqas, Ibn Masud, Ammar, Abuzar, Salman. Saad, Khazimah, Abu Ayyub, Sabi 'bn Hunaf, Zaid 'bn Sabit, Hassan 'bn Sabit, Abul Tufail &c. The curious reader may be referred to the two gigantic volumes of the celebrated Abaqatul Anwar devoted entirely to this tradition alone. It may be said that not a single event in Islam, nor a single saying of the Prophet, is better attested. One may say that even the Quran is not better attested.

It may also be noted that except a very few Sunnis like Shah Abdul Aziz &c, whose interest drives them to it, the great Sunni writers have not ventured to deny the reality of this proclamation made by the Prophet on this occasion. All they say is that it does not prove his Caliphate.¹ The word *Maula* may have been used in the sense of friend, helper &c, even in the sense of spiritual leader, but it may not mean his temporal Caliphate. It is well said in reply that we need not trouble ourselves with this. Ali was *Maula* in the same sense that the Prophet was *Maula*. Religious necessity may drive people to anything. Just think of the occasion and see if it has any meaning or not. Moreover a number of reports, Sunni reports, show that the Prophet tied a turban on the head of Our Lord and observed other formalities of making him heir-apparent. He made people salute him with the title 'Commander of the Faithful.' (For details and references see *Abaqatul Anwar*, or shorter works as *Kanzul Marifat*, *Kilide Munazara* &c). Among those who congratulated Our Lord was Caliph Omar, who said "Hurrah for thee, O Ali, thou hast become to-day my Lord (*Maula*) and the Lord of all the faithful." (Ghazzali, *Sirrul Alamain*).

However, I say, there is something of truth in this contention of the Sunnis. It is a fact that the Prophet used guarded language. What he meant and desired of the people he expressed as clearly as could be desired. But he purposely avoided using the word 'Caliph after him,' as he knew that people would never let that be. The result would be that they would all become open infidels by rejecting an explicit command or teaching of the Prophet. This he always carefully avoided; his policy being not to strain the faith of his raw converts too much, trusting that in the course of time they would of themselves become true, sincere Musalmans to the best of their knowledge. That was what happened. Hypocrisy and half-belief cannot last permanently as a religion.

In note to verse 1 above we have said this was not the first occasion when the Prophet declared this of Our Lord. On several occasions before he had done so, but this was at ordinary times when only a few Sahabas were present. God now wanted this to be announced publicly, and that was what led to the revelation.

Verse 68. If they kept to their own Scriptures they would not fail to acknowledge the Holy Prophet who was clearly predicted in them, even in their present corrupt state. But the more they see of the truth of the revelation to the Holy Prophet the more they become persistent, and distort their religion in order to get away from the obligation to receive him. Thus it is well-known that previous to the time of

the Holy Prophet the Christians were expecting a Paraclete to come to them, and some persons actually pretended to be that Paraclete. But ever since his advent they have been insisting that he is not an individual but a spirit or influence pervading the Church. So it is known that the Christians of the first three centuries were Unitarians. Even when the error of Trinity was introduced it was mostly held in a dreamy figurative way, and there remained at least a background of the Unity of God. It was after the Prophet—due to controversy with the Musalmans—that the doctrine was elaborately worked out philosophically, if I may use that respectable word, the only result of which is that there remains not a shadow even of the Unity of God, or of belief in God at all, in their conceptions.

Verse 69. See note on 2 : 62 (Vol 1). Salvation of some sort is really open to men of all religions provided they piously believe in God and fear Him, in which case they will be careful to keep to their religions in their purity and so, as stated in the note on the last verse, their mind will be kept open to receive the Holy Prophet, and it can only be on account of ignorance that they do not become Musalmans.

NOTE. These verses, also the following, have application to the Musalmans as well, and if they are rightly placed after verse 67 commented above they seem to have a special side-reference to them. 'To thee I speak but hear thou O neighbour.' It is well-known that, generally speaking, it was the spirit of enmity to Our Lord Ali and the smarting sense that he would be their master after the Prophet, that led to disaffection among the Musalmans, and so it was this that chiefly distinguished the hypocrites. 'We never knew a hypocrite' said Huzaiifa 'except by his enmity of Ali.' The more the Prophet showed his attention to him and spoke of his great spiritual exaltation—all by Revelation, no doubt—the more did these people smart and the more did their infidelity increase. Later it was merely to strengthen their position that they invented all sorts of absurd traditions to glorify their favoured Sahabas. Moavyah did all he could for this, and also to publish tales to discredit Our Lord which latter, however, mostly perished owing to their unanimous rejection by later Musalmans. All this is simply a counterpart of "the increase in inordinacy and unbelief" among the Jews and Christians due to the Revelation of God to His Prophet. Like them these half-believers, may be told that if they believe in God and fear Him truly there is no doubt about their salvation. Like them they were to dye their hands in the blood of prophets. Like them they were to be involved in *Fitnahs* but, alas ! too blinded to be corrected. Like them a party would be immoderate in

their love of their spiritual leaders and exalt them to divinity. The case of Ghalis (Nosairees &c) is well-known who take Our Lord Ali as God; and the Sufis are not far behind in their exaggerations about their *Pirs*.

Verse 70. Mark that *Kazzabu* (belied, gave the lie to) is in the past, and *Yaqtuluna* (slay or will slay) is in Muzare used for the present and future. This is an artistic design to suggest that something of their murder of prophets is yet to come on. While the Prophet himself escaped—he was poisoned but recovered—his children will be slain by Jewish minded people. (See Qummi's Comm.)

Verse 71. *Fitnah* here means a time of general affliction or tribulation for the people. The two afflictions are supposed to be those of the invasions of Nebuchadnezzar and Titus. Among the afflictions for the corrupt Musalmans may be mentioned (1) That begining with the rise of Mukhtar to the overthrow of Omyed dynasty (2) That of the invasion of Halaku Khan. Details of horrors of these times for the people concerned can be read in ordinary histories.

Verse 73. In fairness to the Christians I quote the following "definition or description of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity given by Fr. L. Cheikho in reply to a Mohammedan controversialist, and approvingly cited by Gairdner in his 'God as Triune' for the benefit of Mohammedan readers. We earnestly ask our readers to think over it and see if they can make anything out of it.

'God, the One, the Possessor of Glory, Perfection and an essential Unity that admits of no division, is an intelligent Deity, having knowledge of the Reality (*Huqīqat*) of His Divine Essence (*Dhāt*) from all eternity; and by this perfect knowledge of that Reality, which does not in any way take away from His substances (*Jawhar*). He causes to overflow (*Yufi*) on to that Image (*Surat*) the totality of His perfections as though He were It and It were He; and *this* is His self-subsisting Word which was never subject to the creative fiat. And because it emanates (*Sadara*) from Him, and is begotten from Him in thought, not by motion, and not in space and time, abiding in Him continually, we call It 'Word' and Him 'Father,' just as we call the concept of our own thought, the production of our intelligence, 'the Son of our thought' or its *word*, which our lips utter without severing it thereby from our own intellect. Only our word is an *accidens*, while in God there is no *accidens*, so that we are bound to assert that God's Word is God just as much as its source. Further since the Son resembles the Father, being His essential Image, there must be a connection between the Father and His word, whereby

the Father loves His Image and that Image is drawn to its Begetter. And this connection also is not an *accidens*, but is likewise a *substance* (*Jauhar*) the Holy spirit, the mutual love betwixt Father and Son, proceeding from Them both.'

I will not insult the intelligence of my readers by attempting to refute for them the above, every word of which is pure nonsense. For brevity's sake let us ask the following questions only. Where is the necessity and proof of Image? How can the totality of His perfections overflow on to it so as to make him as though (!) He were it and it were He? How in spite of this contingency and action upon it can it be like God, nay the same with Him? How is a substance begotten in thought and abiding in Him continually? How is a connection a substance? Is there anything more here than a chimera of fiction and hypostasis combined.

I quote this long passage merely because there is a clamour among Christian critics of Islam that the Prophet misunderstood the Holy Trinity making it Tritheism. We ask whether the above, in spite of all its unintelligibility, is not substantiaally Tritheism, and whether the word in the verse cannot fully apply to it.

Verse 75. 'They both ate food.' This is the simplest refutation of the Christian doctrine and applies equally to the heresy of the Nosairites. Feeling hungry and partaking of food shows that like other creatures they needed other things for their bare existence. To get rid of this objection the inconceivable notion of Christ having two natures, one divine, one human, has been devised. But, apart from its absurdity, if there was any such higher nature it ought to have placed him above the needs of mortals.

Verse 77. The Christian doctrine is only another form of the doctrine of Incarnation common from the earliest times among polytheistic religions. Whenever they saw something unusual about their heroes or spints they began to say God had incarnated—taken flesh—in them. In Dummellow's Commentary (Introduction) the doctrine is shown to be rational on the following, somewhat incoherent and blasphemous grounds.

(1) Man is created in God's image. There is real spiritual affinity and similarity between the two.

(2) The incarnation of Jesus shows God's love more than any revelation. He showed the highest ideal of goodness and holiness.

(3) This is the best method for atonement of sins. In a sinner the power of repentance is weak. As the head of mankind (in a real spiritual sense) and responsible for its sinfulness the Incarnate Son of God produces sufficient sorrow and repentance before God.

(4) Jesus' incarnation made sinlessness possible for mankind. In Adam all men sinned by heredity. By spiritual rebirth in Jesus we take part in his pure sinless life, and so gain strength for sinless life ourselves.

(5) As the head of mankind, in a real vital sense, he makes man united to God in knowledge and love.

(6) The doctrine lays stress on the brotherhood of man as he is the perfection of mankind as a whole, and in him all are related as brothers.

SECTION 11.

Israelites cursed by David and Jesus on account of their transgressions. Jewish hatred and Christian friendship of Muslims, Christian believers in Islam.

78. Those among the Israelites who believed not were cursed by the tongue of David and of Jesus, Son of Mary. This because they rebelled and became transgressors.

79. They forbade not one another the hateful things which they wrought! surely how evil was that which they were doing.

80. Thou shalt see many of them befriending them that are infidels. Evil assuredly is what their souls have sent on beforehand for them that God is wroth with them, and in torment shall they abide for ever :

81. But, if they had believed in God and the Prophet, and what hath been sent down to him they had not taken them for their friends, but perverse are most of them.

82. Of all men thou wilt certainly find the Jews, and those who join others with God, to be the most intense in hatred towards those who believe; and thou shalt certainly find those to be nearest in affection to them who say, We are Christians. This, because among them are priests and monks, and because they are free from pride.

PART VII.

83. And when they hear that which God hath sent down to the Apostle, thou seest their eyes overflow with tears at the truth they recognise therein, saying, O Our Lord! we believe; write us down therefore with those who bear witness (to it).

84. And why should we not believe in God, and in the truth which hath come down to us, and crave that Our Lord would bring us (to Heaven) with the righteous?

85. Therefore hath God rewarded them for these their words, with gardens 'neath which the rivers flow; they shall abide therein for ever: this, the reward of the righteous!

86. But they who believe not and treat Our signs as lies shall be the inmates of Hell-fire.

Verse 78. As to the cursing of Our Lord David it is sufficient to say that in the Psalms there is a whole series of psalms called *Imprecatory Psalms* such as Nos 64, 94 &c which are so virulent that the Jews do not recite them in their public services. Of the cursing of Our Lord Jesus there is of course no mention in the Gospels, but he always used the strongest language about them, held them responsible for all innocent blood shed upon earth from the blood of the righteous Abel to that of John the Baptist, and told them they were being cursed by Moses for not believing on him 'Think not that I shall accuse you before my Father, but there is one that accuseth you, even Moses who wrote of me.' That shows his spirit and it is sufficient.

Our Lords David and Jesus are mentioned here in preference to the other prophets, as after Moses these were the greatest prophets to whom

Scriptures were given. Also after both of them the Jews suffered terrible calamities (at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and Titus) which were visible signs of the wrath of God upon them

Verse 79. Ninety-nine percent of evil in the world is due to people's weakness making them refrain from reproaching their friends for their evil deeds fearing a breach in their social relations. This is a compulsory duty in Islam the neglect of which is a sin. If people could only agree to cease showing respect to men they know to be bad half the evils of the world would disappear.

Verse 81. By the *Prophet* here is meant Moses, who clearly foretold the advent of the Holy Prophet Mohammed, therefore the Jews, if they believed in Moses, could not have joined the infidels in opposition to him.

Verse 82. This verse shows the better side of the Christian religion and its effect on the character of the people generally and, like 3: 112 &c, shows the cosmopolitan nature of Islam which does not fail to recognize whatever good there may be in other religions and peoples, even those who had adopted open enmity towards it.

Verse 83. This verse and the following are said to have been revealed on (possibly in remembrance of) the effect which Jafar's recital of the Quran had on the Abyssinian king Negus and his people, when the Prophet having sent his persecuted followers to that country as a place of refuge, and the Meccans following them up even there slandered them to the king, whereupon he was obliged to send for them and ask them about their beliefs about Our Lord Jesus, when Surah 19 was read out to him in reply. The king and the bishops who had assembled all began to weep and the king eventually became a convert to Islam.

SECTION 12.

Use of lawful things recommended. Intoxicants and gambling prohibited. Obedience and regard of duty to be made the main principle of action.

87. O ye who believe! forbid not (to yourselves) the good things that God hath made lawful for you but exceed

not the limits. Surely God loveth not those who exceed the limits.

88. And eat of what God hath given you for food, that which is lawful and wholesome : and fear God in Whom ye believe.

89. God will not punish you for what is vain in your oaths : but He will punish you in regard to an oath taken seriously ; and its expiation shall be to feed ten poor men with the average sort of food ye feed your own families with, or to clothe them ; or to set free a captive. But he who cannot find means shall fast three days. This is the expiation of your oaths when ye shall have sworn. Keep then your oaths. Thus God maketh His signs clear to you, that ye may give thanks.

90. O believers ! surely wine and games of chance, and statues, and the divining arrows, are an abomination of Satan's work ! Avoid them, therefore that ye may prosper.

91. Satan wanteth only to sow hatred and strife among you, by wine and games of chance, and turn you aside from the remembrance of God, and from prayer ; will ye not, therefore, abstain ?

92. And obey God and obey the Apostle, and be on your guard ; but if ye turn back, know that Our Apostle is only bound to deliver a plain announcement.

93. No blame shall attach to those who believe and do good works, in regard to any food they have taken, in case they fear God and believe and do the things that are right, and shall still fear God and believe, and shall still fear Him and do good ; for God loveth those who do good.

Verse 89. The vain oaths are those which by constant usage among the people become as it were conventional or part of their language, such

as *Wallah, Billah* &c. meaning 'By God.' Unless these words are seriously used as oaths they require no explation, though the profane use of the Holy name of God (and other holy names in other oaths) is not the less reprehensible as showing a low degree of faith. The verse is legalistic purely. Every single oath is not by itself punishable as a separate sin, though the habit may in a way be sinful, punishable generally, as want of faith is punished, by cutting off access to higher grades.

Verse 90. This is the third revelation about drinking that after all left no excuse for the Musalmans to indulge in it, and henceforth casuistry was devoted to the question whether spirituous liquors drawn from all bases could be covered by the word *Khamr* which, it is insisted, stands strictly speaking for grape wine alone. Though some demur yet the preponderating view among Hanafis and other legal schools of the Sunnis is that *nabiz* (date-wine) and some other wines are lawful. In fairness to Abu Hanifah let it be said that he found the practice of drinking *nabiz* &c. so common among Sahabas and Tabein that he was, as he said himself, obliged to decide in favour of their legality. Thus though Caliph Omar is represented by the Sunnis to have been very solicitous about a revelation plainly condemning the practice—indeed this verse is said to have been revealed on his solicitations, he being dissatisfied with the first two verses (2: 218 and 4: 43) as being not plain enough for prohibition, yet he seems never to have left off the practice of drinking *nabiz* in his life, which forms a constant charge of the Shias against him, based entirely on Sunni reports—and a large number of them there are which show this. (For a brief of references see *Kilide Munazara*). The Shias unanimously hold spirituous liquors of all kinds and bases to be both unlawful and unclean. And owing to their influence this is so, practically, in all sections of Islam.

It will be noted that by classing drinking and gambling with sacrifices to idols (*ansab*) and dividing by arrows (*azlam*) which every Muslim would shudder to think of, the verse suggests that they are as abominable as these heathenish practices.

Verse 93. Fi ma taemu. Commentators say that the preceding verse being revealed Sahabas were mightily afraid about those of their brethren who had passed away, being used to drinking in their life. The verse was revealed to allay their fears. If they were truly God-fearing and virtuous their practice, before this decisive prohibition, may not harm them spiritually.

Mark the repetition of having faith and piety meant to impress that they should not be satisfied with any ordinary degree of it. They should ever strive for perfection in it. The first stage is 'fearing God and believing and doing good deeds,' the second stage is '*again* fearing God and having true faith' and the third stage is that of '*again* fearing God and doing good to others', faith having been, as it were, completed in the second stage. Mark the distinction between doing right in the first stage and doing good in the last. The first is preparation, the last is the ideal.

SECTION 13.

Hunting prohibited during pilgrimage. Prophecy as to the security of Kaaba.

94. O ye who believe! God will surely make a trial of you with such game as ye may take with your hands or your lances, that God may know who feareth Him in secret; and whoever after this transpasseth shall suffer a grievous punishment.

95. O ye who believe! kill no game while ye are in pilgrimage; whoever among you shall kill it purposely shall compensate for it in domestic animals of equal value, according to the judgment of two just persons among you, to be brought as an offering to the Kaaba; or in expiration thereof shall feed the poor; or as the equivalent of this shall fast, that he may taste the heinousness of his deed. God forgiveth what is past; but whoever doth it again, God will take vengeance on him; for God is Mighty, the Lord of retribution.

96. It is lawful for you to fish in the sea, and to eat thereof as provision for you, and for those who travel; but it is unlawful for you, to hunt by land while ye are still on pilgrimage: fear ye God, therefore, before Whom ye shall be assembled.

97. God had appointed the Kaaba, the Sacred House, to be an establishment (*qiyaman*, stay) for mankind, and the sacred month, and the offerings and its ornaments. This, that ye may know that God knoweth all that is in the heavens and on the earth, and that God hath knowledge of everything.

98. Know that God is severe in punishing, and that God is Forgiving, Merciful.

99. The Apostle is only bound to preach; and God knoweth what ye do openly, and what ye conceal.

100. Say: The bad and the good are not equal, though the abundance of the evil please thee. Therefore fear God, O ye of understanding, that it may be well with you.

Verse 94. Mark the intensity. 'God will most certainly try you' and the matter is only killing game while you are on pilgrimage—a thing that no Haji ever thinks of. The object is certainly to impress the sanctity of the Holy Kaaba. So that in pilgrimage to it the smallest game is prohibited. God knew that the Musalmans would violate the sanctity of Kaaba in the most unspeakable manner. Yezid destroyed it and Walid held a court of debauch on its roof. Mansur set up two rival Kaabas one at Jerusalem, the other at Baghdad. In the inroads of Karamites the Black Stone was taken away.

Verse 97. Mark the last words. God has appointed Kaaba to be the place of pilgrimage for Musalmans all over the world, where they should be coming every year with animals for sacrifice. 'This that ye may know that God hath knowledge of everything.' As said in note to 2: 142 (Vol. I) the change of Qibla to Kaaba at a time when it was in the hands of infidels and was filled with idols, was a prophecy that Mecca will soon be in the hands of Muslims and will be cleared of idols, and further that it will thenceforth remain ever in the hands of Muslims and no infidel powers will ever have access to it. The same is said here. The appointment of pilgrimage to Mecca will be a sign to the future ages that the revelation enjoining it comes from One Who knows all things. Hence also the use of the most general word *qiyaman*, implying it is the abiding centre for the Musalmans.

100. 'Though the abundance of the bad may please thee.' Mark that 'thee' is in singular though the address in the verse afterwards is to the Musalmans. Similar address in 65: 1. 'O thou the Prophet, when ye divorce women.' The Prophet is spiritually related to his followers as head is to the body; so in the Quran the address is frequently made to the Prophet, though the address is really meant for the Musalmans. (See Introduction Vol. I).

SECTION 14.

Questions in regard to details discouraged. All practices originating in polytheism denounced. Evidence when truth of witnesses is doubted.

101. O ye believers! ask not about things which if declared to you might (only) pain you. And if ye question about them when the Quran is being revealed they shall be declared to you. God pardoneth as to these matters, for God is Forgiving, Forbearing.

102. They who were before you asked about such things, and afterwards became disbelievers therein.

103. God hath not ordained anything on the subject of *Bahira*, or *Saiba*, or *Wasila*, or *Hami*; but the unbelievers invented a lie against God; and most of them have no understanding.

104. And when it was said to them, Accede to that which God hath sent down, and to the Apostle: they said, Sufficient for us is the faith in which we found our fathers. What! though their fathers knew nothing, and had no guidance?

105. O believers! take heed to yourselves. He who erreth shall not hurt you when ye have the "guidance"; to God shall ye all return, and He will tell you that which ye have done.

106. O believers ! let there be witnesses between you, when death draweth nigh to any of you, at the time of making the testament ; two witnesses—just men from among yourselves, or two others of a different (faith) from yourselves—if ye be journeying in the earth, and the calamity of death surprise you. Ye shall shut them both up, after the prayer ; and if ye doubt them, they shall swear by God, We will not take for it a price, though the party be of kin to us, neither we will conceal the testimony of God, for then we should be among the wicked.

107. Then if it is known that both have guilty of iniquity, two others of those who have convicted them thereof, the two nearest (in blood) shall stand up in their place, and they shall swear by God, Verily our witness is truer than the witness of these two ; neither have we advanced anything untrue, for then should we be of the unjust.

108. Thus will it be easier for men to bear a true witness, or fear lest after their oath another oath be given. Therefore fear God and hearken, for God guideth not the perverse.

Verse 101. In explanation of this verse it is generally said that people used to make questions to the Prophet relating to details on many points, which would require this or that practice to be made obligatory. This was discountenanced, so as to leave a sufficient scope for individual discretion, or the circumstances of the time and place.

It is also supposed that there is a warning here to those who sometimes asked the Prophet about doubtful things, about such things as parentage or ancestry, the answers to which might sometimes be unbecoming. And if a Quranic revelation comes down in answer to or in connection with some of these questions the information may be perpetuated.

Verse 103. *Bahira* is a she-camel exempted from slaughter and carrying burdens after she had brought forth five or seven or ten young ones. Her ears were slit. *Saiba* is a beast left to pasture without atten-

tion She was neither ridden nor her milk taken. *Wasilah* another superstition about she-goats. *Hami* is a stallion-camel left at liberty and not made any use of. These stand for all similar practices and restrictions derived from ancient custom having no authority in the word of God or teachings of the Prophet.

Verse 104. The breaking of these time-honoured rules was received with a shock, and this is denounced as a vestige of Heathenism, in which it undoubtedly had its origin in the deeper strata of consciousness.

Verse 106. The following story is related in connection with this verse. Two brothers (both Christians, names doubtful) were entrusted by their dying Muslim companion in Syria with certain property to be made over to his relatives on their return to Medina. The two brothers, however, stole a cup of silver, making over the remaining property; the relatives found a complete list disclosing a cup of silver as being part of the original property, and thus the evidence of the Christian brothers was shown to be false. 'After the prayer' that is they should give their evidence in full congregation.

Verse 107. This verse is said to have been revealed when the dishonesty of the two men appeared. Thus there was a long distance of time between the two verses. It is the knack of Muslim commentators to relate a story about every verse as having occasioned it. The two verses seem to give a general rule. Any decision based on evidence can be upset by subsequent evidence proving the former to have been false. The laws of limitation that civilized countries enforce are all illegal and unjust. It was probably to enforce and give permanence to this principle, owing to prophetic insight that it will be systematically forgotten in the future, that this regulation, apparently of little importance, found a place in Quranic revelation.

SECTION 15.

Jesus a mere Prophet. His miracles. Descent of food from heaven for them at request of the disciples.

109. On the day that God will assemble the Apostles, and say, What answer were ye given (*Ma za ujibtum*, what response did you get)? They shall say, We have no knowledge, but Thou art the Knower of secrets.

110. When He shall say, O Jesus, Son of Mary! call to mind My favour upon thee and thy mother, when I strengthened thee with Holy Spirit, that thou shouldst speak to men alike in the cradle, and when grown up;— And when I taught thee the Book, and the Wisdom, and the Law, and the Evangel: and thou didst create of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My leave, and didst breathe into it, and by My leave it became a bird; and thou didst heal the blind and the leper, by My leave; and when, by My leave, thou didst bring to life the dead; and when I withheld the children of Israel from thee, when those hadst come to them with clear signs: and those who believed not said, This is naught but plain sorcery;

111. And when I revealed unto the disciples (*Hawariyyin*), Believe on Me, on My sent One, they said, We believe; and hear Thou witness that we are Muslims.

112. (Remember) when the disciples said, O Jesus, Son of Mary! is thy Lord able to send down a furnished Table to us out of Heaven? He said—Fear God if ye be believers.

113. They said—We desire to eat therefrom, and to have our hearts assured; and to know that thou hast indeed spoken truth to us, and to be of the witnesses thereof.

114. Jesus, Son of Mary said—O God, Our Lord! send down a Table to us out of Heaven, that it may become a recurring festival to us, to the first of us and to the last of us, and a sign from Thee; and do Thou nourish us, for Thou art the best of nourishers.

115 And God said—Verily I will cause it to descend unto you; but whoever among you after that shall disbelieve, I will surely punish him with a punishment that I will not punish any other creature with (like of) it.

Verse 109. What answer were you given? That is, Did those to whom you were sent accept your message and remain true to it or was it otherwise? This does not mean that the prophets did not know of these things, or did not know as fully as might be, but that it is best to answer thus before the Almighty—especially when the evidence is likely to be against a creature.

Verse 110. See Surah III verses 47, 48. Note that the same words are used here as in these verses showing that all these things are to be understood literally.

Verse 111. *Auhaitu* 'Inspired to' the Apostles. Faith as distinct from belief—and to a certain extent belief also—is directly a gift of God, for which a man must constantly pray. So far as reasons for belief, love and obedience are concerned they are common to all, but it is only a few who get to faith, are inwardly drawn towards it, so to speak, and so it is something of the nature of inspiration. The inspiration of the prophets is also not something capricious. It is always preceded by a life of earnest longing and prayer.

Verse 112. *Is thy Lord able &c. (Yastatiu).* These words must appear strange in the mouths of Our Lord's disciples who were witnessing so many miracles almost every day. Had they not even the rudiments of faith, the merest belief in the power of the Almighty God. But such, it would appear from John Ch VI, was actually the case, not of course in the case of the chief disciples, but in the case of the majority of his followers. Let us analyze this chapter, as it is important.

(Verses 1 to 14). Christ having a large following, five thousand persons, and having no arrangement for their food feeds them with five loaves and two fishes taken from a lad, and after they had eaten their full, the fragments that were left were so many that they filled twelve baskets.

(Verses 15 to 23). Seeing this miracle (and so many before) they resolved to make him their king, which being distasteful to Our Lord, he left the place secretly. After waiting till sunset the disciples too left the place and came over by sea to Capernaum where Our Lord joined them walking on the waters.

(Verses 24 to 26). The people thus missing both the Master and the disciples set out in search for them and finding them at Capernaum came round him, but Our Lord displeased, and said to them 'Verily, verily, I

say unto you, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life which the Son of man shall give unto you.'

(Verses 27 to 33). At this they seem to have suddenly forgotten everything. Being asked to believe in him they began to say 'What sign shewest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? What does thou work? What shall we say of this? Nay more.' They referred to the manna that came down to Moses' followers and asked him to give them something of that kind 'Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written. He gave them bread from heaven to eat' (Exodus 16 : 15. Numbers 11 : 7). To persons who could so easily forget all the miracles there could be but one reply 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven,' (meaning himself and the faith in him).

Such is the story, and who will believe it *as it is*? The sequel is also interesting. This explanation that he himself is the bread from heaven and "he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" continues to verse 59, when the chief disciples also begin to murmur : and in verse 65 it is said that from that time many of the disciples went back and walked no more with him. Only the twelve remained, and one of them too was a devil.

Such is the story, I say again, and as it is who will believe it? I have given it at this length as I surmise that it is possibly this story, so oddly distorted and made absurd in the Gospels, that is referred to in these verses of the Quran. The only germ of truth that is probably at the back of this all is that having witnessed so many occasional miracles some of the disciples asked Our Lord whether a permanent, lasting, or what is practically as effective, a periodically recurring miracle, of the type of *manna* which came to the Israelites, could be vouchsafed to them. This is the meaning of *Yastatiu* 'Is thy Lord able?'—not that they doubted whether this was in the power of the Almighty God; they simply wondered whether He would do it, whether it would fit in with His scheme of things. Just as we say, can I take this? meaning not whether it is physically possible to do so, but whether it would be unobjectionable. The reply probably was that so long as they have faith in him that would be easy enough, spiritual food sufficient to nourish them and keep them in strength for their work would continue to descend on them from heaven. Those who have read my note on 2 : 118 (Vol 1)

carefully will see why it was undesirable to give a physical miracle of this permanent, continuous character. It would lead to the state called *Kashfe ghita*, the uplifting of the veil, when the truth of religion becomes so obvious that no one can possibly doubt it, and so there remains no virtue or merit of faith; indeed there remains no room for faith at all. And when any such miracle is given, and people still continue to disbelieve then divine punishment (*azab*) invariably follows. So it is said in verse 115 below that if after this anyone disbelieves I will punish him with a punishment that I will not punish anyone else with it. Thus while in the imperfect and grossly corrupt state of the Gospels, as they are, it is impossible to be always able to find confirmation for each and every incident mentioned in the Quran, it is clear that there is sufficient trace of this one before us here. The disciples certainly asked for meal to descend on them from heaven and to continue to do so indefinitely. The use of the word *gastatiu* (explained above) here, while neither it nor any similar word is ever used in the Quran in connection with miracles, marks this almost certain. There is surely, no travesty of Eucharist here, as Christian writers assert.

Verse 113. Food from heaven must be immeasurably superior in kind and quality to any on earth. None can be blamed for desiring to have a taste of it. The seeking for the resting of the heart and knowledge by direct experience, as distinct from faith, of higher things above is similar to that which prompted Our Lord Abraham to pray to see how God would raise the dead (See 2 : 260).

Verse 114. *Eid* is something which occurs again and again at intervals, hence the word is used of feasts of the calendar. It is this secondary meaning that has led Christian critics to suppose that it is their Eucharist which is referred to here. But this is surely a mistake. All commentators say that the Table used to descend for sometime and then discontinued. Qummi says it discontinued when the rich began to feel wroth to dine with the poor. This may be so or not, but no commentator suggests that the prayer was for a miracle of which the anniversary should be kept by the Christians. This identification with the Eucharist is therefore purely gratuitous; and so it is quite useless to say anything about it or its precious philosophy of transubstantiation which has agitated the Christian world throughout the ages. Surely Islam can lend no support to men eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ.

The sum of it all is that Our Lord did certainly pray for a Table laden with provisions to descend on his chief followers and that to be

continued so long as morally and spiritually they remained fit to receive it. Whether it did descend or not, whether it was purely physical food or spiritual food served only to the most spiritual in moments of great spiritual ecstasy, whether it was for an elect few or for all—these things the Quran does not say; the details in traditions are not generally very reliable. The idea that it did not actually descend is rare and is probably based on the next verse, which would make it probable that Our Lord out of mercy for the people would have withdrawn his request. That it might be spiritual food which might be invisible to others, I suggest on the analogy of similar gifts from heaven to the Prophet and the Imams that we read of in traditions. That it was for an elect few is to me very obvious and morally certain.

One thing may be reasonably asked. How it was that this miracle though occurring repeatedly, however early it might have ceased, has left no trace of it in the traditions of the people so as to find a place in the Gospels or other early literature. To say nothing of the extremely meagre information in these small tracts and letters, they were written so late, about the end of the first century when all had become a tradition. Moreover these gifts, being given to the elect few and the common people not being allowed access to them, were probably kept secret and not generally talked of. There was still further reason for secrecy if the gifts were only spiritual, and not able to be seen by the eyes of the worldly. And there was a spirit of secrecy in those days for reasons we cannot explore. Our Lord is stated in the Gospels to have enjoined the secrecy of many of his miracles, though there appears no very obvious purpose for it. The Prophet and the Imams did not make mention of the special gifts to any but the most devoted followers.

The above I hope is sufficient to clear all difficulties which are simply due to there being no record in Christian accounts of any such miracle. I have shown that a miracle of this type was certainly asked, though refused in its patent physical form. This does not preclude its being given to the elect few in a highly spiritual, intangible form.

Our friend the Ahmadi Commentator may be left here. His note saying that this prayer is simply that for daily bread in the Lord's prayer is simply bosh.

SECTION 16.

The doctrine of Jesus' divinity was an invention of the people after his Ascension. Reward of the faithful.

116. And when God shall say : O Jesus, Son of Mary, didst thou say unto people, Take me and my mother as two gods besides God. He will say, Glory be to Thee (*Subhanaka*). It were not for me to say that which I had no right to say. If I had said that Thou shouldst have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thine. Verily Thou art the Great Knower of hidden things.

117. I spake not unto them except what Thou didst bid me to, That ye worship God, my Lord and your Lord ; and I was a witness (*Shahid*, watcher) over them while I stayed among them, but since thou hast taken me to Thyself (*tawaffaitani*), Thou hast Thyself watched them, and Thou art witness (*Shahid*) over all things.

118. If Thou punish them, they are Thy servants, and if Thou forgive them, verily, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise !

119. God will say—This day shall their truth benefit the truthful ones. Gardens shall they have 'neath which rivers flow, and remain therein for ever. God is well pleased with them and they with Him. This is the mighty achievement.

120. Unto God belongeth the sovereignty of the Heavens and of the Earth. and of all that they contain ; and He hath power over all things.

116. It is not clear that the doctrine of Trinity is referred here though it is said that some Christians of the Prophet's day held Trinity to consist of God, Jesus and Mary. But irrespective of this the fact that Divine honours are bestowed on the Holy Virgin, and she is

worshipped—actually worshipped in the same way as Jesus—as the mother of God in Roman Catholic Church to the present day, is a matter of common knowledge. But for the fact that something of divinity was ascribed to her no one could have ventured to give her the absurd and blasphemous appellation of the mother of God. She could not have been mother of God unless she was herself in some way divine. So apart from popular belief which every one holds for himself, slipping in all sorts of exaggerations, we find this even in the carefully guarded language of Romish Church Catechism. 'That she is truly the mother of God and the second Eve, by whose means we have received blessing and life; that she is the mother of Pity (with Capital P) and very specially our advocate; that her images are of the utmost utility.' Even if it be supposed that divinity is not meant to be taught here one can easily see how it can grow to it in the minds of the ignorant, chiefly women. So leaving aside Arabia, 'the Marian cultus' as it is called grew as much in the West as in the East, and we read of women in Thrace, Scythia &c in the habit of worshipping the Virgin as a goddess and offering cakes to her image as oblation (Ency. Britt, 11th Ed). On 15th of August they hold a festival of the Assumption of The Holy Virgin.

It is this that is of count and is complained of in the passage—it is never said, and it is quite indifferent, whether she is deified as a member of the Trinity or otherwise. So the clamours of Christian critics of Islam that here there is a misrepresentation of Trinity are quite unfounded—as a member of the Trinity even Jesus, the man, was not held to be a god. For the persons in the Trinity existed from all eternity. Jesus, as Jesus, became God when the Son incarnated himself in him. I remember that in his Lectures on Syrian Church which I read some years ago Burkitt observed that word *Ruh* being feminine in Hebrew and Syriac that might have led to the idea that the third person of the Trinity was a female, and hence the deification of Mary.

As to the Holy spirit it is sufficient to cite Neander (after Dr. Lamson). "Even as late as A. D. 380 great indistinctness prevailed among different parties respecting this dogma, so that even Gregory Nazianzen could say, 'Some of our theologians regard the Spirit simply as made of Divine operation; others as a creature of God; others as God Himself; others, again, say that they know not which of these opinions to accept from reverence for the Holy Writ which says nothing upon it.' Hilary of Poitiers (a Nicene theologian) expresses himself in a similar way and 'does not venture to attribute' to the Spirit the name of God, because the Scripture does not expressly so call him." Again "Though

Basil of Caesarea wished to teach the divinity of the Holy Spirit in his church he only ventured to introduce it gradually." (cited by Lamson). In his work 'The Church of the First Three Centuries' Dr. Lamson has shown that the personality of the Holy Spirit was not taught by Clement of Rome; in the shepherd of Hermas it was supposed to mean Christ; Justin Martyr sometimes supposed it to be the chief angel, sometimes held it to be an influence, sometimes confounded it with the Logos as many of the fathers did. Origen thought it to be created by the son, as also did Eusebius. It is omitted in the creed of Tertullian: not alluded to in the Epistle to Diognetus. The Council of Nice only slightly touches upon it. That of Constantinople declares that it is to be worshipped and glorified. And so on and so forth. Who can know what the Christians believe or not believe? As a matter of fact they themselves do not know what they believe or not believe; and God has surely a right to know what they really or practically believe, though it may not be clear to their own consciousness. Even among the most cultured Catholics many might believe in the divinity of Mary in a more real sense than in that of the so-called Holy Spirit.

It may also be pointed out that whenever the expression taking as gods (*ilah*) besides God is used in the Quran it is in the sense of holding them as objects of worship and has no reference to any theological theory underlying it. So it is here contrasted in the next verse with worshipping one God only. The idolators of Mecca held their dieties as only mediators between themselves and God (39: 4), yet they were polytheists nevertheless.

Verse 117. *Shaheed* means watcher as *Raqib* in the next clause. It is different from *Shahid* and is not rightly translated as witness. See note on 2: 143 (Vol. I).

Tawaffaitani, here too the word means hadst taken to thyself and *not caused to die*, which is only a transferred meaning of the word due to euphemism. The Ahmadi Commentator tries to argue for the latter meaning by a tradition in Bokhari in which the Prophet is said to have said that he would say similarly when he would be shown on the Day of Judgment some men who had gone against his teachings. But this does not prove the point. So far as active watching over the people is concerned the taking away of Our Lord to Heaven was practically the same as death, both involving removal from this plane of existence. Great religious beliefs held unanimously by all sects of Islam from the earliest times by continuous tradition, and expressed in hundred of the sayings of the Prophet

and Imams cannot be exploded by stray inferences of this kind. See note on 3:45. To do this it is necessary to explain how such a universal belief arose and got such a permanent footing in Islam.

The continued life of Our Lord Jesus completes the parallel between Islam and Israelite religions that is referred to in the well-known prophecy that there will be nothing in the history of the older religions but will find a parallel in this. Jesus was the Last Israelite Prophet. Our Lord the Mahdi of Islam is the last of the Imams. Both continue to live for an indefinite length of time though hidden from the eyes of the people, the only difference being that as a prophet was to come after Jesus, he was taken away to Heaven, whereas the Mahdi of Islam remains on earth. The communication with our Lord Jesus is practically impossible now, though previous to the Prophet's advent it was probably not so, however difficult it may have been, for those who were truly devout and holy. In the case of Our Lord the communication with him is easier though still difficult for the majority of the people; and there is no age but that some persons get the favour of his interview though it is generally out of his free choice that he grants it to those he favours, and the door is not open for all. However, to those who remember him and cry to him in their distress he is always near and helps them in all their troubles and difficulties. See *Shihabe Saqib* by Allama Husain Nuri where a large number of well-authenticated cases is given down to contemporary times.

For us the continued physical existences of Our Lord Jesus is a lesson that we should not doubt in a similar indefinite span of invisible life granted to our Holy Imam, on whom be peace and blessing for ever.

Verse 118. This leads us to hope that salvation of some kind is possible to those who die in error, but are not wilfully perverse rejectors of the truth.

SUPPLEMENT TO Vol. I.

Surah 1 : 5 & 2 : 1.

It may be well to point out that our note, showing that higher guidance for faith, and sustaining grace for holiness, comes through the spiritual influence of the prophets and the Imams and other holy men.—a truth which is emphasized repeatedly in these notes, (see note on 2 : 1 &c) —is sufficient to clear the difficulty, real or supposed, which Christian critics appear to feel about the Islamic conception of God's guidance. Thus after analyzing the teaching of the Quran regarding God's grace for guidance, and showing that it is restoring grace, sustaining grace, sanctifying grace, and so on, Rev. Gairdner in his 'The Quranic Doctrine of Salvation' proceeds to say as follows :—

"Yet with all that we have said of the teaching of the Quran on the operations of the grace of God, there is a want of clearness in the words which describe the dealings of God with the conscience and heart of the believer. This want of clearness is due to the fact that the Quran is wholly wanting in any satisfactory doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Mohammed had no true conception of how the Spirit of God works in the heart of man. He knew that repentance, faith and good works are not the result of man's unassisted endeavours, but are in some way dependent on the work of God's grace in the human heart; but, since his doctrine of God.....left no place for any conception akin to the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit, he was at a complete loss for any mode of expression whereby he could explain how these operations of grace could be carried out.

"The operations are recognized, the result of them is acknowledged, but the manner of them remained incomprehensible. They were not, to Mohammed's mind, simple acts of God in no way to be distinguished from His acts of creative power whereby He brought into existence the world and all it contains: for while he clearly saw, on the one hand, that they were the operations of the Will of God, he acknowledged, on the other hand, that they were conditioned by the acts of men.

"In this Mohammed, while being very much at one with a great deal of the teaching of the Old Testament, yet fell very far short of the conception of the Old Testament as to the manner of the working of God's Spirit.

"In the Old Testament, the 'Spirit of God' is the means whereby Jehovah has dealings with men. From its operations men receive wisdom, skill, understanding, insight into Divine truth. Through its workings in their hearts men are sanctified. Throughout the Old Testament, it is true, the Spirit is never personal; yet Jehovah acts personally through the Spirit.

"The Quran, on the other hand, simply attributes to God directly all these operations of the Spirit, without being in any way able to explain how they are carried on."

Before replying to these strictures it requires to say once for all that the difficulty, real or imaginary, does not arise at all. We do not attribute guidance, and other such actions, directly to God. Like all other things God has appointed agencies for these things which work in unison with His Will—the prophets and the Imams. This is clearly stated in note to 2: I (Vol. 1, P. 13) and referred to in note to 1: 5. The spiritual influence of these holy souls, which we hope to secure by trying for spiritual union with them through the bond of love, does all that; and it is clearly a very intelligible operation. If the supposed 'Spirit of God' is required for that it is clearly unnecessary. Can the spiritual influence of Our Lord Jesus Christ—the man Jesus I mean—not be able to do even that much for Christians that Snfi *Pirs* and spiritualists of all religions are known to do for their people? Is Satan something of the Spirit of God, that he exercises so intangible an influence for evil? Could there be nothing corresponding to that for good?

In short God does not deal directly with His creatures in anything. Whatever He does He does through His Holy agencies which act in perfect harmony with His Will. As such God identifies them with Himself. See Introduction Vol. 1, P. 104. In fact they are manifestations of God, the expressions of His Will. They answer to what the Christians hanker for, a God *incarnating* Himself in someone to reveal His character—a mere impossibility. Prayer is made to God directly—for guidance as for everything else—as He is the motive force behind His agencies, and it is understood that in answering our prayer He will not come face to face with us to give us what we want, He will bestow what He does through his Holy agencies.

But irrespective of all this it is right to say that this appears more as a matter of fact than of a philosophical necessity. There appears no impossibility in God's guiding men directly by "acts of creative power" though "they may be conditioned by acts of men." God may so will that His act would be effective only so far as men are willing to submit to it. This may be improbable or derogatory to His high position, but is not metaphysically impossible. Indeed creation seems to be modified and even thwarted by acts of men and other influences every day.

Rev Gairdner has contented himself with showing the inferiority of the Islamic conception to that of the Old Testament one as to the manner of the working of God's Spirit. Here he says "the Spirit is never personal; yet Jehovah acts personally through the Spirit." He does not mention the higher, loftier Christian conception which makes the Spirit personal, one of the three members of the Holy Christian Godhead. That would surely have commanded instant belief! As it is we are disappointed, and confine ourselves to the less preposterous position. Instead of refuting it or ridiculing it, we think it sufficient to elucidate it, and that in words of a Jewish writer Geiger, whom the author himself cites approvingly for the purpose—only italicizing words requiring special attention.

"In the development of Judaism, in order to guard against forming too human an idea of the Godhead, it was customary to attribute the speaking of God, when it is mentioned in the Scripture, to the *personified* word of God, as it were *embodying that emanation from the Deity which came in Christianity to a veritable incarnation*. In like manner also when in the Scriptures the remaining stationary, or the resting of God is mentioned, something *sensibly proceeding from Him is to be thought of*. This is especially so in the case of God's dwelling in the Temple; and this "*emanation of the Godhead*" to adopt the speech of the Gnostics was called on this account the Shekinah, the resting. From this derivation Shekinah came to be the word for that side of Divine providence which, as it were, *dwells* among men and exerts an unseen influence among them." Emanation, incarnation proceeding, dwelling! For the Holy Spirit in Christianity see 4: 116 note, and for the Holy Spirit in Islam see 2: 87 note and Supp.

Note to Surah II, Verse 7, Section 1.

It remains to discuss the thorny question of liberty and necessity and its allied problems of divinity and theology. Since this is rather an

important subject and also has bearing on many passages in the Qnran besides the one before us it would be best to consider the question from different points of view.

A. *Psychologically* man can be considered free in a relative and restricted sense. Man, the mind of man, is a very complex thing. It is composed of thoughts, feelings and emotions, all of which are related to each other, and it is very difficult to change them or get rid of their influence without a long, slow and gradual effort. These thoughts, feelings and emotions may not all be consciously present to the mind, they may be hidden in the deeper strata of sub-consciousness, yet so long as they are there they will continue to work their influence and play on the conscious mind from within. This adds to the complications, and hence to the difficulty of speedy reformation.

All these multifarious sets of influences, known and unknown, constitute what is called the character of man. It is this character, made up of so many elements, that determines the liking or acting of a man in a particular set of circumstances. In one sense it is perfect liberty, for what other thing can liberty mean but that a man should do according to his choice. But in another sense this is much like necessity. It appears that he could not do otherwise.

Which of these two is the more correct view depends on our definition of the *ego*. The "I" is no more than an impression in the mind. It gets to have a certain fixed association in which these influences, termed character, do not enter. When I think of myself, I think myself as a thinking, reasonable being who should choose according to the dictates of reason; I do not think of myself as a brute necessarily swayed by any passions that may arise. So I think that in any particular case I might have acted otherwise if I had not yielded to the temptations before me. Is this "if" a mere vain idea, being a condition impossible to be realized? Here is the point for liberty. In mental matters thought has great energy. If a man thinks he is ill he will be ill, and similarly if a sick man thinks he is well, he will be well. If a man thinks seriously that he should realize his higher character as a reasonable being the thought *will* overcome all the lower influences, and he will do what he ought. Intensity of thought, determination is a great thing and can work wonders. Hence the sudden changes of character as in the well-known instances of Fuzail 'bn Ayaz, Bishre Hafi, the Poet Hafiz &c. It is owing to this gift of mental energy that man is morally responsible; it is for neglecting to

use it that he is morally culpable. It is true this gift of energy, this power of determination is not equal in all persons, and gets more and more weakened by long neglect of it in a sinful life. But, as would appear from the instances of the men named above, it is never wholly extinct. Rather, for the most part, the power is only latent, and any cause might stir up our whole personality and then the force would be seen to be terrible. However, to the extent that there is real loss of power, or there is great difficulty in calling it forth to action, there is a reduction in the amount of responsibility. All men and all circumstances are not to be treated alike—they will not be so treated by God.

One thing more has to be noted. Apart from the influences mentioned above, the mind of man is subject to telepathic and spiritual influences from without, and one has to be particularly on his guard about them. Love and hatred help us to receive or reject these influences. Hence the importance of these for spiritual advancement, which has been sought to be impressed upon in notes to Sura 1. 5 & 2: 1. and other places in our Commentary.

B. In *Divinity*, predestination takes the place of necessity against the power of man to make a free choice of his own. One popular argument is this: God's fore-knowledge cannot be falsified. If He knows beforehand that I will steal, how can I help doing it? The fallacy consists in not taking account of the whole of God's fore-knowledge in the matter. If He knows that I will steal, He also knows I will do it of my own free choice. That leaves me as responsible as ever. If I were not to do it there would be nothing about it in God's fore-knowledge. Indeed if fore-knowledge were to imply necessity in that way, God Himself could not remain a free agent as He certainly fore-knows all He is to do to the end of the world. The radical error consists in the idea that when a thing happens to be certain there remains no room for free choice in it, whereas freedom consists in doing what one chooses and choosing what one likes, whether the ultimate result is known by himself or another, or not. One thing requires to be noted. We speak of God's fore-knowledge and conceive of it in the same sense as we would speak of our own fore-knowledge. This is a great error. God's attributes are as incomprehensible as He Himself is. His knowledge differs from ours not merely in being Infinite and Omniscient. It certainly is something wholly above all that we mean by the word knowledge—as much above it as a Creator should be above His creatures. I have sought to explain this higher conception of God's attributes in my *Principles of Shia*

Theology and Islam in the Light of Shiaism. chapter II. But even letting this higher conception alone, we know that His knowledge, unlike ours, is not based on causality, and so there is no causal connection between His knowledge and our acts.

Yet while actual predestination of our actions may be an error, still it would not be right to say that His Will has no relation whatever to our actions. In a way all our actions, good and bad, are traceable to His Will, yet He is not the author of them directly. He has created the world and has designed it on a certain principle. That principle is that there should be real moral goodness coming out of it. This real moral goodness is nothing but that we should come to it by our own effects, sailing across trials and temptations. So the possibility of temptation is a thing designed. Whatever happens agreeably to something designed may in a way be said to be designed itself. Thus those who fall into temptations do nothing inconsistent with what God has designed the creation for. In that sense God may be said to have willed that they should do so, yet the act is no less an act of their own and God has no hand in the matter; on the contrary it is against His design so to control people's actions or interpose in their choices that they may not be able to do them at all.

The next thing of importance to consider is that God is not *muattal* or inactive. It is wrong to suppose that having created the world He is now doing nothing—only seeing it go. He is active and listens to the prayers of the humblest of His creatures. Even if man is too weak to resist temptations, he can as a rational being *wish* at least for guidance and strength. Then there will come spiritual graces from God through His Holy saints—the prophets and the Imams. We have seen at the end of A above that there is provision for this, and this actually happens. Thus even in the extremest case there is room for liberty, and that is sufficient to establish man's moral responsibility.

C. *Teachings of the Imams.* Consistently with what we have seen above we find that the Imams taught that there is neither perfect free will, nor a hard compulsion over man's moral nature, but a state of things midway between them. This doctrine of Imams is well-known (see Sale's Preliminary Discourse and our Introduction). Thus a man having asked Our Lord Sadiq "Has God compelled men to sin" He said; "No." Then the man asked "Has He left the matter to them?" The reply was again, "No." "What then is it" he asked wondering. "Grace from thy Lord between the two" replied the Imam. (Kafi). Our Lord Ali was asked by

one of his followers in a battle if his going on the *jihad* was being done under God's ordaining (*Qaza*) and His determination (*Qadar*). Being told yes, he said, then he was compelled to do it. Our Lord replied "Dost thou think that it is a fixed binding decree? Were it so, reward and punishment would become unmeaning and so would command and prohibition." (Ibid).

The following passage in the well-known prayer of Our Lord Ali known as the Duae Kumail expresses how Divine decree and man's free choice, go hand in hand in determining his course of action.

"O Lord, Thou hast passed a command upon me in which I followed the desires of my mind and was not cautious about the Enemy's making things seem fair to me: So he deceived me into what he wanted and the decree (of Thine) helped him in that. So I transgressed, by what passed over me, some of Thy restrictions and disobeyed some of Thy commands. So to Thee is due from me all praise of thankfulness for all this, and there is no defence for me in what has passed over me, wherein was Thy decree and which Thy command and trial made necessary to cling to me. So after my fault and playing wastefully with my soul, I come to Thee, making excuses, ashamed, broken-hearted &c."

The passage makes it clear that the command whatever it is, is not something ordained absolutely. While the reality of the command is not denied and it is admitted that it has some hand in the matter, yet it is distinctly said that man acts not wholly in obedience to the command but does the thing because he follows the desires of his mind and the counsel of the Evil One. It is confessed that he should not have done so and if he had resisted the temptation he might not have fallen, in spite of the so-called command. The command has thus only a part effect in the matter—this is all that can be said of its power over us. Similarly it is spoken of in the passage as merely assisting or facilitating the action that is really due to man's personal inclinations and the like. Again in the passage the word trial is conjoined to command, making it clear that the command is not a decree of obligation it is rather something of a piece with or at least consistent with trial, leaving something for man's choice in the matter. What, then, can this command or decree be when it is not sought to be rigidly imposed? and what is its bearing on our actions?—for some connection it surely has with them otherwise it would be useless to mention it here. Evidently the command is not a command at all in the usual sense of the word. It is an expression for God's design in creation.

Man is so created, so constituted that he shall always be liable to be swayed by temptations, and the world he is placed in is full of these temptations. Yet there is something given to him, which if he uses it in the proper way he can overcome all his passions and so no temptations will have any effect on him. It may be expressed in the form of a command thus: "Thou shalt fall if thou dost not guard thyself in the proper way." The proper way is the way of proper, sincere desire to avoid evil, combined with such small efforts as are possible to one to combat the evil tendencies of his nature. The language of the prayer represents man almost as a passive subject of evils coming upon him, and yet alive to the fact that he can combat and get rid of them. That is indeed the true state of man with respect to the freedom of his will.

D. *Teaching of the Quran.* For this I had better quote from a Christian writer in a work written expressly for missionary work interested in finding fault in Islam and depreciating it in the eyes of the world. [I would only warn the reader against his exaggeration in showing that but for God's guidance men could not be in any degree virtuous. This is true, but this initial guidance is imbedded in human nature "All are born in the religion of Nature (Islam), it is their parents who make them Jews or Christians."]

The doctrine of God's grace in relation to man's guidance and human will generally as taught in the Quran is so fully and clearly explained by Rev. Gairdner in his 'The Quranic Doctrine of Salvation' that I cannot resist the temptation to quote from him even at the risk of great length, summarising here and there to save space. This will also show that, whatever cavillers may say, the teaching in the Quran is so clear that even a non-Muslim reader cannot be mistaken about it.

Beginning with the question of God's guidance he says "Sometimes 'guidance' is no more than the offer of God's mercy—the proffer of help and enlightenment from Him. Yet even in this sense it means not merely formal offer of help—the general truth that God is willing to direct man. It includes such a manifestation of His purpose and desire to help and enlighten men and thus save them, accompanied by signs and proofs which ought to be sufficient to induce them to accept the proffered help, that it may truly be called 'guidance.' In other words the offer of God's mercy is made, not as a mere formality to all, so that they may be left without excuse, but as a true and sincerely meant opportunity for their escape from that darkness in which they are into the true light.

Thus we find 'And as to Thamud, We had vouchsafed them guidance ; but to guidance did they prefer blindness' (41 : 16).

"There is, however, a deeper and more particular sense in which the word guidance is used. It refers, at times, to the effectual working of this grace of God in the hearts and minds of those who accept the offer made to them. Those who believe and follow the direction are those who are guided.

"This mercy of God is nothing abstract. It is an experience—a working of God on the conscience and heart, and it is felt by those who have experienced it to have been from God. They well know that what they are is of God's grace, and that all they have been able to attain to has been of His gracious leading and His mercy. ' And he shall look and see him in the midst of hell : and he shall say to him, " By God thou hadst almost caused me to persist, and but for the favour of my Lord. I had surely been of those who had been brought (with thee unto torment)." ' (37 : 53-5 cf 7 : 41).

"Corresponding to this deeper guidance of God there occur other expressions which speak of God's misdirecting or misleading men. The most general statement of this may be found in those passages which state that God does not guide the unjust, the unbelievers, the liars &c. Yet it is exactly such whom God seeks to guide and direct. The offer of His grace and guidance is to the unjust, the liars, the impious. Even Pharoah, in the midst of his impiety and rebellion against God, is offered His guidance. " Go to Pharoah ; for he hath burst all bounds ; and say, ' Wouldst thou become just ? Then I will guide thee to thy Lord that thou mayest fear Him ' " (79 : 17-19).

"When, therefore, we find statements that God does not guide the impious, we must look closely to see the real meaning of the words, and we find it in the sense that such, while continuing in sin and wickedness, manifest by their conduct that they are not following the guidance of God. In this sense, and in this sense alone, is it meant that God does not guide them. Their evil deeds and their unbelief are not of God (cf Surahs 27 : 50, 30 : 28).

"It is from this point we must start when we seek to understand the Quranic teaching that God causes men to sin or leads them astray.

"The proffered mercy of God is twofold in its effects on mankind. It leads some, it hardens and thus misleads others. When accepted, it

leads to light and truth and happiness ; when rejected, it becomes the means of searing the conscience, of hardening the heart, of blinding the spiritual insight, and of causing to err. God does not act in one way with some and in another way with others. The same 'act' of God leads some and causes the others to err. The passages which make this clear are many, and we cannot do more than quote a few.

" 'That which hath been sent down to thee from thy Lord will surely increase the rebellion and unbelief of many of them' (5 : 69).

" 'It is to those who believe a guide and a remedy ; to those who believe not, there is a thickness in their ears, and to them it is a blindness : they are like those who are called to from afar' (41 : 44).

" 'Thou wilt mislead by it whom thou wilt and guide whom thou wilt (7 : 154. cf also Surahs 14 : 32, 6 ! 25, 125) [See also 9 : 125-6, 2 : 24 quoted by the author].

"Through all these passages it is clear that this hardening of the heart, this blinding of the inner eye, this deafening of the spiritual ear is a punishment on those who *will* not believe. It is but the confirmation of the sentence that those who, following the suggestions of Satan, will not open their hearts to Divine truth, with them hell shall be filled. 'God said : Go forth from it, a scorned, a banished one ! whoever of them shall follow thee, I will surely fill hell with you, one and all' (7 : 17, cf verses 37. 143).

"This hardening, this misleading, is the punishment and yet the result of obstinate unbelief and culpable disregard of the 'Signs' of God, which should have led to repentance and faith, (cf Surahs 43 : 35 ; 45 : 6-7, 22, 30 : 47 : 18, 25 ; 53 : 23 ; 2 : 36 ; 84 : 53 ; 28 : 56 ; 61 : 5).

"That the effect of the offer of mercy depends on the reception which it meets on the part of man, is made clear in the following passage. 'Verily thou canst not guide whom thou desirest ; but God guideth whom He will ; and He best knoweth who will yield to guidance,' (28 : 56).

"The offer of God's grace must be accepted and received by man ere it can effect any benefit on him in enlightening him or directing him into truth. Man cannot tell beforehand who will receive it, but God can, for 'He knowest best who will submit to be guided.'

"Those who knowingly turn away from God will find their desires and affections and their very ideas concerning truth so changed that they will not be able to discern truth even when they see it. This is the

leading of God into error. Thus we find, 'And when they went astray, God led their hearts astray, for God guideth not a perverse people.' (61 : 5).

"We cannot close this section without drawing attention to the fact that in some passages the verb *adalla yudillu* usually translated 'to lead astray' does not necessarily mean to *lead astray* or *mislead*. It may mean to *regard as being astray*, to *look upon as being out of the way*..... (See 4 : 90, 30 : 28).

"Having then seen that there is a Divine purpose of mercy we come next to ask, who are included in this purpose?

"In the first place we note that the offer of this mercy or direction is made to all men.....All mankind have the opportunity of following this direction. The universality of the offer is brought out in several passages. For example, we find the words,.....'The truth is from your Lord, let him then who will believe, and let him who will be an infidel' (18 : 28).....'In a right way have We guided him : be he grateful or ungrateful.' (76 : 3) To be grateful is to be believing : to be ungrateful is to be unbelieving.....

"Perhaps the most general statement with regard to this offer of salvation to all men is to be found in 'This (is) no other than a warning to all creatures, to him among you who willeth to walk in a straight path but ye shall not will, unless God willeth, the Lord of all creatures' (19 : 27-9) The offer is made to all, for the admonition is to *all creatures*. This can only mean that the guidance of God is in all good faith for all.....

"In God's purpose none are excluded on predetermined grounds, or on foreseen disobedience, from the possibility of participating in the benefits of His guidance, and in the blessings which flow from the following thereof. It cannot be imagined that the last clause of the sentence, 'but ye shall not will, unless God willeth, the Lord of all creatures' is to be taken in any sense which would be a virtual denial of the first clause. Whatever the meaning of this clause may be, such an explanation is inadmissible. If this were to be admitted the first clause would be absolutely meaningless, if not absurd; which, as a matter of fact, is the main statement of the verse, which the second clause is meant in some way to modify, but not to deny.

"In the purpose of God, His guidance is intended for all men, and is available by all. If any have refused it, that is not to be put down to

the Divine unwillingness to allow them to participate in it. None are excluded on *a priori* grounds, so to speak, from participating in the benefits of this offer of salvation.

"The one thing which must exist on the part of the individual is a willingness to accept the guidance. That this willingness on the part of the individual must be enforced is one of the teachings of the Quran which stands out clearly and emphatically. It lay within the possibility of the Divine omnipotence to over-ride the will of man, and thus make all men *of one religion*, as the Quranic phrase sometimes is ; or, as it is sometimes put, God might have *led all men*. In other words, God could have so forced the will of man that none could have refused to accept His direction and guidance. But Mohammed saw clearly that such was not, as a matter of experience, the way in which God had seen fit to direct mankind.

"As regards times and seasons, as regards means and methods, none can will to accept the guidance of God, but as He willeth. God has reserved unto Himself the determination of events so that these impulses and motives, which lead men to accept His guidance, originate and act in His providential dealings with men in such a way that man's willingness to accept the Divine guidance depends on and issues forth from the Divine will. *Man's actual willing in the course of history is dependent on the working out of God's will. (Italics mine).* And thus man can claim no merit even in that part of his salvation, which consists in the acceptance of the Divine offer of mercy.

"It is specially to be noted that the expression here translated (81 : 27-9) by Sale 'unless God willeth' does not in the original have such a definite and decided sense. It is not unless *if* God will, but rather unless *as* God will. It expresses a condition of means and manner rather than a condition of possibility.

"The condition 'unless as God willeth' limits not the power of men to will the acceptance of His offer of salvation but the time and manner and way in which men will. In fact, the meaning, at bottom, is very much the opposite to that which is generally supposed to be attached to the expression. It is an encouragement to men rather than a ground for their doubt or even hopelessness. If a man feels inclined to accept the offer of salvation, he may be certain that the inclination is in accordance with God's will, and if he accept it he may rest assured in his own mind that the Divine will is leading and guiding him.

"The mistake commonly made in the interpretation of this and similar passages is akin to, if not identical with the false view so long taken by Calvinists of the doctrine of election. The doctrine of election in both the New Testament and the Quran, is a doctrine to comfort and encourage those who feel drawn towards the truth. They may rest assured that the very fact that they desire to follow the guidance of God is proof that are called of God. We are not reading into the Quran any teaching borrowed from Christian theologians, but are simply trying to explain what the text of the Quran appears itself to teach.

"Nowhere in the Quran are men taught that they must first become assured that God has chosen them as individuals, in other words that God has willed their personal salvation, before they can of their own will accept His guidance. It is all the other way about. Men may rest assured that God has willed their salvation when they feel drawn towards Him, and as an act of their own will, consciously yield themselves to His guidance.

"None need ever despair of the mercy of God, thinking that the mercy of God is not for him. Even to Pharoah, in his arrogance and sinful opposition the guidance of God is offered."

Referring to predestination as the sixth article of Muslim creed, according to the orthodox (Sunni) Divines the writer, referring to Surah 4 : 135-6 says clearly that "It cannot be truly claimed to be one of the necessary articles of faith according to the teaching of the Quran."

on 2 : 25.

NOTE.—This passage, short as it is, is sufficient to make it clear that the future life we expect in heaven is in some sense a physical one and analogous to that on this earth. In other places as in Surah Dahr or Rahman we have fuller details, which leave no doubt about the teaching of Islam on this subject. Thanks to this detail, the Muslim church has been true to its tradition on this point, and all sects of Musalmans, however much they may disagree on other matters, have ever been unanimous about it. No teacher who has the slightest regard for conscience or reputation has ventured to allegorise or otherwise do away with the clear descriptions of Heaven and Hell in the Quran. Yet nothing is impossible for the heroic Ahmadi Commentator whose work is one continued effort to explain away all that may possibly be taken objection to

by the class of readers he is writing for. However laudable his purpose might appear to some from a purely missionary point of view, and however ingenious the explanations might be that he has invented, there is no doubt that the effort is most disingenious. Far from assisting the cause of Islam such forced interpretations are the most effective way to bring it to ridicule. Thus the word *Rizq* (sustenance) so common in every body's mouth is made to signify portion. The trees constituting the garden are supposed to be allegorical for faith which is in one place (14:24) compared to a tree which gives its fruit in all seasons. "The rivers represent the good deeds which are necessary to the growth of the seed. There is also a hint at the Muslim conquests for which see 24:19" (note on Surah Rahman verse 46 where the two paradises mentioned in that verse are explained as the fertile lands watered by the Euphrates and Tigris). Such explanations may better be left without a word of refutation. There is no doubt much of prejudice in the current thought and culture against the Muslim conception of Heaven and Hell, but rather than yield to these prejudices and resort to such makeshifts for their sake, it would be better surely to analyse the prejudices themselves and see what gives them birth and strength.

(a) As I try to understand it it appears to me that the root cause is the philosophical habit of mind which refuses to accept anything without positive evidence. For this reason a great many persons reject the idea of future life at all. Those that cannot divest themselves of the idea of future life, are content to restrict that belief to that unknown and unknowable thing, called soul, whose mode of existence being mysterious does not commit us to any clear conceptions which can be challenged for want of positive evidence. Hence the tendency of all culture, ancient and modern, has been to deny future life altogether, or if this is impossible, to rarify the conception almost to the vanishing point, reducing it to a mere notion instead of a clear definite conception. It is this really which passes for spirituality of the future state which appeals to the religious mind of to-day. (b) As against this the return to physical life which we have left is regarded as inherently improbable and involves the conception of bodily resurrection, a thing which involves infinite difficulties of conception. (c) Ages of thought have filled the mind with the worthlessness of this physical life, its limitations, passions, and so forth; and particularly this physical body has been considered the greatest impediment to spirituality; the mother of all evils. One ancient philosopher is said to have felt ashamed that he had a body. Hence the return to physical life is also considered hardly ennobling, if not positively degrad-

ing. (d) The Muslim paradise is represented or rather misrepresented to be a world of pure pleasure and this is rightly held to be simply degrading.

It is best to deal with each of the above one by one.

(a) So far as the question of positive evidence is concerned we are to some extent at least on sure ground. If we have not any direct experience of Heaven and Hell we have at least direct positive evidence of the teachings of Islam concerning the state of *Barzakh* (Surah 23 : 102), the state of the soul from the time of death to that of Resurrection. All psychical research that has been going on for the past fifty years, has been confirming the teachings of the Prophet and the Imams on this point. It shows that the dead survive after death in a state of active life in which they are able to respond to others and in a measure act and be acted upon according to their morals (not faith) in this life. They visit their relations, perceive their happiness or troubles and sympathise with them. They can also communicate their thoughts to them in dreams or by other suitable methods. All these things have been fully confirmed by recent psychical research. This is so far opposed to Christian teachings that the ministers of that religion feel obliged to keep up a constant warfare against modern spiritualism, and call it the work of devils. According to them the state of soul after death, pious and wicked alike, is one of pure undisturbed sleep. It is also certainly opposed to the Hindu doctrine of transmigration of souls—at least as commonly and popularly understood. The theosophists are trying to build out a philosophy of future state on the basis of these recent revelations. For further discussion of the question see note on the verse referred to above, also my *Science and Islamic Tradition and Principles of Shia Theology*. I say, when there is positive evidence available for one part of the Islamic teaching on the point there hardly remains any just reason to reject the other part. If everything were open to direct observation, what would there remain for faith ? and what would be the use of any Revelation ?—the sole object of which seems to be to supplement human knowledge as to matters which, though essential for man to know, should for the most part remain hidden from the ordinary sources of knowledge.

The slightest philosophy is sufficient to make it clear that pure spirit is an impossible conception, a meaningless word. There must be some body to give it individuality by marking its field of action and setting limits to it. Hence there is no escape from physical body, however etherial you may choose to make it, to lighten the burden of your conception.

As regards (b) it has to be observed that (1) the argument just given shows that there is no question of return to physical life after we have left it. We never left physical life entirely. We carried at least a remnant of it—an etherial body from this world to the next. Where then the difficulty of thinking that at some period this remnant might drag the other elements with it and be solidified again into the gross physical body? (2) The conception of the physical body and the physical world generally as hard material existences that are foreign in their very essence to spiritual world (whatever that may mean) and cannot exist therein is an out-of-date conception, obsolete both in modern science and modern philosophy. What is the conception of matter which the physicists are driving at? Motion without the particles moving, in other words a manifestation of force. And what is force but the essential activity of the spirit, without which it is nothing? So far from this physical world being essentially foreign to, it is as a matter of fact *the* spiritual world which the unreflecting are looking for in the future. Where, then, the improbability that the spiritual world of the future is essentially similar to this, only much more perfect?

As to the bugbear of bodily resurrection that too is perfectly conceivable, and is expressible in scientific language as a case of reversibility of the motion of every particle of matter in the Universe, conceived as a cyclic process. As Lord Kelvin illustrates it. "The bursting bubble of foam at the foot of a waterfall would reunite and descend into the water, the thermal motions would reconcentrate their energy, and throw the mass up the fall in drops reforming into a close column of ascending water." And so on. Where then the inconceivability of particles separated and dispersed along the four winds uniting for a time in a body going backwards as it were along its history? And in so far as life is a special function of the arrangement of particles in the body there is no doubt that resuscitation must take place at some stage of its back-development. We do not mean to say that resurrection is really to happen that way; but we mean to emphasise that the Universe contains possibilities of all kinds, and there is nothing very wonderful looking to the Infinite Power of the Almighty God.

Nothing need be said about (c) which is nothing but prejudice. As Hegel has well said "If you have not your spiritual world here, you have it nowhere." But it will take ages of culture for mankind to divest itself of this prejudice. Ages of intellectual tradition have impressed it on us, and it has wellnigh imbedded itself in the deeper strata of our consciousness.

As to (d) I have said it is pure misrepresentation. How much of true piety there is in the Muslim Heaven is clear from the fact that for pride Satan was expelled from a paradise which was not this, but one much lower (see 7 : 12. and Cf 19 : 63, 52 : 23, 56 : 24, 78 : 35, 88 : 11, 13 : 24, 14 : 28, 36 : 58, 56 : 25, 15 : 47, 3 : 13, 5 : 19, 9 : 73, 78 : 28, 98 : 8). These verses will show how much of virtue and piety there is to be in heaven. As to traditions it is sufficient to refer to the famous tradition of the Prophet in which he says that the breath of the inmates of Paradise will be *Tasbih* (glorification of God). The following extract from a prayer of Our Lord Ali II will speak for itself. "O Lord, make the Ablebait (close relations) of Thy Prophet and their decendants and their followers meet Thy Prophet, the chief of the prophets, and make us meet them as men who are faithful, devout, goal-attained, guarding evil, pious, God-fearing, worshipping, favoured with grace, favoured with strength, acting virtuously, purifying (others) and purified (ourseives), turned in repentance to God, bowing down and prostrating in worship, thankful in gratitude and praising God, patient, self-observing, turning towards God, and attaining to blessedness."

In another prayer of Our Lord we have the prayer regarding the attaining to Heaven. "O Thou that would bring together the blessed Heaven with harmony of hearts and intensity of love and take out all ill feelings out of their hearts, and make them brethren sitting face to face on carpets, O, Thou that would ering together Thy obedient servants and him for whom Thou hast created Heaven, O Thou that removeth the sorrow of all who are in grief. O Thou who art the resort of all who are destitute, O thou.....O Thou that maketh feelings tender among the friends. Bless Mohammed and his sons, and do not put me to anguish by cutting off from me the sight of Mohammed and his sons and cutting off my sight from them." The sight of the Holy Prophet and the Imams and their com pany is the highest bliss that the pious hope and pray for in Heaven.

The same value of spirituality in the future life appears when we read descriptions of the torments of Hell. Thus in verse 2 : 169 we read "God will not speak to them and will not purify them ; and for them there is a grievous torment." In a prayer of Our Lord Ali we read "Granting that I patiently endure the torment but how shall I bear Thy separation ; let me grant that I patiently bear the heat of Thy fire, but shall I bear the cutting off of the sight of Thy grace".

This to say that the Muslim conception of the happiness of Paradise and torment of Hell is merely physical and sensual is mere misrepresenta-

tion. It is true we are promised physical enjoyments of all kinds, but are they mere carnal pleasures as they would be on this earth? Allowance is not made for the more perfect life of the Hereafter. A clown is apt to think that the Viceroy of India is living a life of mere pleasure and sport. He cannot conceive what keeps the mind of the Viceroy occupied all the time in the midst of his pleasures. So we too on earth are apt to think that as pleasures fill the mind—with most men at least—and divert the mind from sober and holy thoughts and pious feelings, they must necessarily do the same in higher life hereafter. As a matter of fact pleasures of life, even those the most sensual, are not inconsistent with true devotion even in this world. Some of them are the most sacred of religious duties, and become essential elements of piety and devotion if approached in a true sense of duty and spirit of gratitude and thankfulness to God. How much more compatible they should be in the perfect life hereafter of the perfection of which we have not the faintest conception?

The truth of the matter is that, since pleasure-seeking is always connected with neglect of duty in this life, a strong association has been formed giving degrading implications to the very word, pleasure. And since duties in this life are always matters requiring struggle and self-sacrifice these qualities have come to be associated with a sort of moral value of their own, and consequently any life where ease and comfort appears to prevail is considered to have no moral and spiritual value whatever. These are mere prejudices which require not refutation, but mere elimination. A man having such ideas will be unable to attach any value to the goodness of God Himself.

That the *ideal* state in Muslim paradise according to the Quran, the one to which the believers are particularly exhorted, in that of Holiness is so clear that even a prejudiced Christian critic, seeking expressly to show the contrary, cannot ignore it.

Rev. Gairdner in his "Quranic Doctrine of Salvation" does not refer to the very clear verse.....

"Verily the God fearing will be in gardens and rivers. In the seat of Truth with (or in the presence of *inda*) the Lord Powerful". But he is compelled to note the force of *inda* occurring frequently in this connection, and says :

"The reward of Paradise, then shall be 'with (or, in the presence of) their Lord.' What exactly Mohammed intended to convey by these words it is difficult to say. The words may mean simply that all

the joys and pleasures of Paradise proceed from God as their source and giver; but it may be that he intended to teach the truth that there could be no pleasure in Paradise apart from the presence of God and the conscious knowledge of His favour.

“ We find the following description of the state of the blessed, ‘ God promiseth to the faithful, both men and women, gardens ‘neath which the rivers flow, wherein they shall abide? and goodly mansions in the gardens of Eden, but best of all will be God’s good pleasure in them.’ Thus the greatest blessing will be the conscious knowledge of God’s favour and the sight of God Himself. Again on this point we do not desire to enter into details.....How the blessed shall enjoy the vision of God who is unseen is a point on which the theologians have not a little to say.” (We too choose to say nothing on this here).

Note on Surah 2, Section 4.

The story of Adam as given here and in other places in the Quran requires to be compared with that given in the Bible (Genesis chap. 2) as it shows the necessity of a new revelation. The old revelations are either lost or are intensely corrupted, and not only no reliance can be placed on them, but if their accounts and teachings are accepted it would tend to degrade religion to the lowest depths. According to the Bible God placed Adam in a garden He had “planted,” having among other good things two trees, “the tree of life.....in the midst of the garden and the tree of knowledge of good and evil ” (chap. 2 : 9) which latter He forbade Adam from eating of it. At the suggestion of the serpent Eve first and then Adam were tempted to eat of it, and saw the effect of it immediately. They became sensible of their state of nature and felt the shame of their nakedness. It was for this that God cursed them. God was therefore interested in keeping us ignorant and foolish. And rightly so, for then God began to have other apprehensions, “ And the Lord God said, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the Tree of life, and eat and live for ever : therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man and placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherabims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the Tree of life.” (Genesis III, 22-4).

Comment on this is superfluous. God jealously seeking to keep man away from knowledge and discretion, and, foiled in this, driving him away lest he should take even bolder steps, and stretch his hand to the Tree of life, and thereby have to live for ever. It is degrading to have to refer to notions such as these; but what to do? There are still millions who go about preaching all this blasphemy as the Veritable Word of God.

The story of Adam as given in the Quran is meant to correct all this nonsense. He has been created to act as Vicegerent of God on the Earth. He is given knowledge which distinguish him above the angels and he receives homage from them. Everything necessary to his happiness and comfort is at his disposal. But all this is worthless unless he enjoys them in a true obedient spirit. To develop this he is, by way of discipline, forbidden to eat of a certain tree (not tree of the knowledge of good and evil, remember) however tempting it may be for him. By itself there is nothing wrong in eating of the tree, in fact it was created for him, but it is a disciplinary order, and must be obeyed without any question about its reason or purpose. Adam fails in this and yields to the temptation of Satan who makes him believe that if he would eat of it he would have eternal life. This is mere deception on his part. Adam forgets that nothing can have any efficacy irrespective of God's Will and Pleasure. This makes God justly angry with him and He drives him away from the garden and its felicity.

But the fault was not a very serious one after all. Adam repents and is pardoned. He is given a word of guidance which he accepts and prays with and is reconciled to his God. In fact at the very moment that God pronounced his sentence upon him and his progeny He had made a promise of sending His guidance to them assuring them of happiness, if they will follow it.

What a vast improvement on the old silly tale of the Bible! But rather than be thankful to it, the Christian writers accuse it of not following the Biblical account with slavish fidelity. Thus one writer charges the Quran with having made a confusion of the two trees spoken of in the Bible—the tree of knowledge and the tree of life. One is apt to smile at this charge when one remembers what a fine use the Bible has made of these trees. If one were to engage in controversy with this class of critics, one might refer to the article on Adam in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* XIth Edition in which the writer, himself a doctor of divinity, shows that the Biblical account is borrowed from old Chaldee and other

sources, and in this particular is mistaken. There was but one tree designated both as Tree of knowledge and Tree of life, for according to the old conceptions what gave true knowledge gave true eternal life. Such objections may therefore be simply passed over in silence.

The question that is of more consequence to us is whether the account as given in the Qaran is to be understood literally or should it be regarded as more or less of an allegory. That the story lends itself easily to an allegorical interpretation goes without saying, and it has long been the resort of those who, having succumbed to the prevailing spirit in the West, have begun to get alarmed at everything savouring of the supernatural. Thus in an article in the *Islamic Review* Khwaja Kamalud-din writes, "The episode of Adam, as narrated in the Qaran is very instructive. It discloses the two extremes of man's nature—its Zenith and its Nadir. Adam represents humanity in the Qaran. He has been created, as the narrative goes, to act as the Vicegerent of God on the earth. He is given the knowledge of things that may help his growth. Through this knowledge he gains ascendancy even over the angels and receives homage from them. Everything contributing to his happiness and comfort is at his disposal. He is also given the power of discretion, but is warned against things detrimental to his happiness and comfort. Bliss and prosperity reign over his domain. He, however, forgets the warning in his moments of ease and comfort, and lends ear to evil counsel. It leads to an error of judgement, and he makes wrong use of his direction. It brings troubles. It affects his happiness and he loses all that created security against grief. Then comes repentance and forgiveness from the Lord. God, out of His grace gives Adam a word of guidance so that he might make right use of his faculties, and promises a similar revelation to his progeny assuring them of happiness if they will follow it.

"A true description of human nature. It supplies a correct insight into things that bring us success or failure. It also gives us the *rationale* of religion and it is thus that we have been equipped with capabilities to to act as Vicegerent of God on the earth. The universe and its various components have been left at our disposal. We need knowledge of things around us, which, when attained makes us "monarchs of all we survey." We are also given the power of discretion, error in judgement causes catastrophe. We need direction from the Most High to regulate our choice of things. We need also knowledge to work out our capabilities to their height and avoid the pitfalls that carry many to the depth of degradation." (*Islamic Review* Vol. XIV No. 2.)

This is all very excellent and I cite it in full as I well appreciate it. But can we be sure conscienciously that the story as given in the Quran and as amplified with details in the traditions was really meant by God and His Prophet to be understood as a mere allegory. I am afraid it is difficult to be sure of it, so it is hardly right to preach it in that light. In the first place there seems no use of allegories, particularly long-continued ones in the shape of stories, when the truths sought to be inculcated thereby can be easily taught in a simple direct way. Then if allegories are indulged in these must be clearly taught to be taken in that sense only. At least there must be found some special features of presentation in the narratives, some varied forms of expression, say, which make it clear that truth is to be sought behind the surface meanings of the words. Particularly it is very objectionable to cite a story which has been current for ages among people and wrongly believed in its hard literal sense. To present such a story meaning allegory only, but yet without any corrective indications to that effect, appears to me to be simply perpetuating an erroneous belief. This is hardly very desirable.

The Ahmadi Commentator has tried to find authority for such a view of the story in other verses of the Quran, but has hardly been successful. He tries to show that the Holy Quran does not always use the word Adam in a particular sense. It is used in the general sense, meaning humanity, and obeisance of angels to Adam has also a general significance. As for instance 7: 10-11 run, "And certainly We have established you (men) in the earth and made in it means of livelihood for you, little it is that you give thanks. And certainly We created you, then We fashioned you, then We said to the angels, Make obeisance to Adam" (7: 11). In another verse on a similar occasion the word *bashar* (man) itself has been used: "When your Lord said to the angels I am going to create a mortal (*basharan*) from dust, so when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My inspiration (spirit. *Ruh*) then fall down making obeisance to him" (38: 71-72). The second authority may be left without a word of answer. It might have served if Adam could not have been rightly called a man. The first verse 7: 11 can certainly be stretched to make a case for the allegory view. But really it aims at cutting off even the possibility of that interpretation. There is a peculiarity of expression here which must have some object and purpose. The address from the preceding verse is to men, mentioning their creation, and then it is all suddenly changed and it is said that *then* the order was given to angels to make obeisance to Adam, whom everybody must understand to be our first progenitor. What could the purpose be except to show that

the obiesance of angels was something peculiar to Adam and was not to be supposed as relating to mankind as a whole, though mankind as a whole was included in Adam the progenitor and hence the address in the verse is to mankind with a you. We created you that is in Adam. Your creation &c. was involved in 'his. It is in the same way that in verse 2: 38 when ordering Adam to get away from the paradise the address is to all men, "We said, go forth from this garden, all, so surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve." These, all men, did not exist at the time of the sentence, but they are addressed as if they were. They existed in Adam. The same is the reason of the address in the verse we are considering. All this apart from the general usage of involving sons in matters relating to forefathers of the instances of which the Quran is so full. What to speak of Adam, with whom our connection is so vital, God speaks of Abraham as a people, Surah XVI: 120, "Verily Abraham was a people (*Ummat*) obedient to God and turning (towards him) and he was not of the polytheists." The Prophet includes in his higher spiritual personality all who believe in him and attach themselves with him.

But it must be understood that while rejecting the allegorical interpretation of the story as a whole we do not mean that every little detail is to be understood in a hard literal sense and there may be nothing figurative about the language at all. Thus Adam is said to be created out of dust. This does not necessarily mean that he was built up of inorganic silicon, iron, calcium, aluminum &c. Higher scientific, philosophical and spiritual matters can only be expressed in poetical language in teachings meant for the masses, and there would be no harm in allegorising here.

We would also wish to point out that the account of Adam in the Quran and the traditions of the Imams no way commits us to the belief that our progenitor Adam *supposed* (in accordance with the Biblical account) to have been created some 8,000 years ago was the first man and that human species did not exist on earth before his time. The traditions of the Imams are explicit on this point. Thus according to a famous tradition cited by Saduq the animal creation began some 1,00,000,000 years ago and various forms of lower creatures were created and destroyed ten times. Then 30,000 Adams (species of man) were created one after another, and our progenitor Adam was the last one of these. In another tradition, apart from genii, a species of rational creatures called *Nasnas* are said to have existed and been destroyed before Adam (*Kafi*). The name given suggests irresistibly that they were a species very much

akin in shape to man, something intermediate between apes and man. So whatever may be said about the story clashing with the *theory* of evolution (*which is a mere, unprovable hypothesis*) the traditions of the Imams are remarkably consistent with *facts* revealed by geological researches which show not only that a succession of animal species for long ages preceded the advent of man, but also that some kinds of human species existed on earth long before the Adam of the Bible. I have before me the picture of a human skull found in 1908 near La Chapelle-aux-Saints in the Department of Correze, which is of a man at least twenty thousand years ago. These researches may cause consternation among the Christians pinning their faith to the Bible, but are a matter of gratification for us and glory to our Imams. (See my Science and Islamic Tradition).

Then, whatever the *jannat* (paradise) of Adam might be, Adam was not created there so as to be transplanted thence to the earth. According to a tradition of Our Lord Baqir, Adam was first created on earth, then taken to the *Jannat* (agreeably to Surah II : 35 where command is given to Adam to enter and occupy the garden); and he did not stay there for more than six hours, and did not pass a single night there (Ali 'bn Ibrahim's Commentary). The object of taking him to the *Jannat* was evidently to give him a plunge into the spiritual world, as he was to become a prophet and the progenitor of a race having a tinge of spirituality in them.

The last thing said just now above gives us a piece of evidence for the truth of the story of Adam, as given in the Quran and the traditions, in the true literal sense. All know that there are such things as spiritualistic powers, telepathy, clairvoyance &c. which are wholly inexplicable to orthodox science. They are attended sometimes with physical powers and phenomena of a supernormal kind, which too are equally inexplicable. In Home's presence tables lifted themselves up in the air without being touched, chairs moved about, stools galloped and waltzed, flowers came out of vases and distributed themselves. He could increase or decrease his height and stature at will. These things were witnessed and investigated by eminent scientists such as Sir William Crookes, who attests to their reality, and so there can be no reasonable doubt about them. Equally strange were the physico-spiritualistic experiences of Rev. Stainton Moses, which are equally well credited, and can be read of in any work on spiritualism. The same is to be said of "the performances of the Neopolitan medium Eusapia Palladino who convinced many scientific men, such as Lombroso, Morselli, Richet and, in England, Sir Oliver Lodge, of the genuineness of her phenomena, whatever the explanation may be." The eminent German physicist Zollner was so much impressed with the spiri-

performances of Slade that he set up a theory of four-dimensional spirit-world as the only means to account for them. Thus the reality of things and powers called spiritualistic is beyond question, and it is needless to argue them out here.

Now it appears that these powers are possessed only by peculiarly endowed persons, called mediums, and in them they appear spontaneously. They may be nascent in other men, and they may develop something like telepathy by constant exercise; but the higher and more striking powers as the physical ones only appear spontaneously. They also are sensitive to peculiar lights called odic seen round persons and bodies, which are quite imperceptible to us.

The question now arises how these powers have arisen in the race. Are they developing in the course of evolution? or are they recurring survivals from our ancestors who possessed these peculiar powers in plenty. Biologists are simply mute. They simply ignore the question. Ostrich-like they bury their heads in face of the difficulty, and then strut forth puffing out their so-called science of evolution, based carefully upon ignoring all difficulties whatever. The fact that these spiritualistic powers are not merely useless, but positively harmful to the vital activities concerned in the struggle for existence shows that they are recurring survivals of undesirable elements, excluded in the course of evolution by natural selection. This is indeed the simplest explanation, and is the prevailing view among those (very few) who, like F. W. H. Myers, have given thought to the question. This is also confirmed by history so far as it goes. Ancient history is full of records of occult powers and phenomena, which we, moderns, read of with an air of incredulity. Why? Because similar things are so rare in the present day. But there can be no reasonable doubt about their substantial reality. No one can deny that spiritualistic powers were very much studied and cultivated in Ancient India. The Yoga philosophy was nothing but that. And there is no doubt that much of the fascination, so well-known to have prevailed in ancient Egypt, Babylonia and India, had much to do with occult powers. All this has been giving way to the more practical needs of a growing population, and their struggle to prevail over and live at the expense of each other.

The question now arises, wherefrom has man got to have these strange occult powers? Will it be said that he has inherited them from his animal ancestors? That, however, seems to be the only possible reply, if the doctrine of evolution is correctly stretched to man and he is no

more than a descendant from an anthropoid ages. Apes, and for the matter of that, all lower animals must therefore display something of these occult powers—indeed if it is true that the faculties are vanishing in the course of evolution, we should find them greater and greater the lower we go down in the scale of creation. Does this not by itself show that man is somehow a special creation? Or at least some of ancestors had somehow a plunge into the spiritual world, so that he got to have supernatural powers of which there is not the remotest trace or analogy in his supposed animal ancestors. Why then deny the truth of a Revelation which teaches just the same thing? In fact there is nothing strange or incredible about this, nothing that is not recognized, however partially and reluctantly, by the eminent men of science who have condescended to enquire about the truths of spiritualism. It is agreed on all hands that a *prima facie* case at least has been made out for survival after death. Sir Oliver Lodge has written a work of that name to give the vast amount of evidence for it. The existence of a spiritual world is undeniable, though we cannot conceive it in the ordinary sense of conception, which is limited to material forms. It need not be somewhere beyond the heavens, it need not be anywhere other than here, for our spirits when we are alive are somehow here. Further it will appear that the same peculiar individuals, who furnish evidence for survival of souls after death, display the occult powers which, they say, are due to the spirits. The two are therefore somehow connected; we must admit that even though we hesitate to take the professions of the mediums at their face value. These occult powers and phenomena are displayed in this, our material world. The spirit world, therefore, that is revealed in these spiritualistic researches, is therefore something somehow connected with our physical one, and therefore in some sense here. Indeed it need not be anything more than a sum total of spiritual, non-material entities called spirits, and forces connected with those entities, and that can be anywhere.

The teachings of the Imams also tell us the same thing about Adam's paradise. "It was here on this earth and sun and moon shone upon it." Yet it was something manifestly higher, superphysical, supernatural. The two are not wholly disparate. It is the possession of supernatural powers, the control over spiritual forces, that makes the difference. In fact this present physical world would be a veritable paradise (in the fullest sense) to us if it were to, or could be made to, respond exactly and immediately to all our wishes, so that whatever we wanted should take place almost spontaneously. If Adam had been given any such powers he was virtually transplanted to another world, though

remaining all the time in the world we are in, and that new world would have as much reality—true objective reality—as this world has for us. The world is nothing but a sum of forces, it is our capacity to enter into communion with some of these forces that makes it appear to us as a world of such and such form and features. If we were differently constituted, as for instance if we had senses other than those we have, this same world would appear different to us, as it does, we are sure, to certain insects and other animals, who appear to be gifted with some senses of which we are destitute and of which can have no conception. And that world, as it appears to those insects, is certainly as much real as this world known to us. There is no doubt, it reveals to them realities—in this very world—which are simply non-existent for us, simply because we are blind to them and cannot be affected by them. What, then, are we to say of the world as it would appear to Adam if he had been given higher spiritual perceptions and powers. The world, as it is to us, might have been as it were, annihilated for him, and he might have found himself in a wholly new one—real, remember, in the fullest sense of reality, objective reality.

Adam's Paradise was therefore a reality, in fact it may even now be anywhere about us though with our stunted, paralyzed senses and energies we cannot perceive it. But we still retain a reminiscence of the past glory of our great Ancestor. By the laws of heredity we should expect that the spiritual powers this world consisted of should now and then spontaneously appear in some feeble degree in some of his progeny, and that we find exactly in nature. Not only, therefore, there seems no reasonable ground to reject the story of Adam as it is given in the Quran and the traditions, but here we have a piece of evidence which strongly tends to prove it.

That leads us immediately to the question of the special creation of Adam, which the evolutionists are specially concerned to contend. Confining themselves to man's physical body and the normal mental functions, intelligence &c., they show that these could have developed by small progressive variations from the bodies and minds of lower animals. In these there is no doubt a difference only "of degree" and not "of kind." But the higher spiritualistic powers seem to make a difference not only "of degree" but "of kind." And the difference becomes decided conclusively when we look to evidence for survival after death. The existence of disembodied spirits upsets their whole theory, for, they regard soul as no more than what psychologists call mind, and hold it to be a mere function of the living body. So they ignore it altogether,

deny it, poopoo it away. In all the works of Haeckel, that I have read of, the word Spiritism occurs only once (complaining that the gifted scientist, Wallace, became devoted to it) and in the works of many other evolutionists there is not even that much. Yet the twenty-five volumes of the Journal that have been issued from the Society of Psychical Research are living testimony to the mass of evidence that has been collected under the careful scrutinizing eyes of eminent men of science, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, Sir William Barret, Professor Sidgewick and others. It is indeed the habit of these men to pass over the arguments of their antagonists, even in their own Science of Biology. Thus Haeckel devotes pages after pages to complaining about eminent anatomists and biologists as His, Virchow Ranke &c. who explain everything in other ways but never takes the trouble to give a gist of their arguments and to criticise them in a fair methodical way.

Indeed it is easy to prove anything in this way—simply ignoring whatever may appear to tell in another direction. Yet we would be surprised if even with this method the evolutionists can succeed to establish their main position—the development of various forms of life from one another by mere chance variations, uncontrolled by any directive agency behind Nature. I cite the following from Prof. Wilden Carr expounding the philosophy of Henri Bergson.

“The problem is to account for the variations of living beings together with the persistence of their type—the origin, in a word, of species. There are three present forms of evolutionist theory—the neo-Darwinian, according to which the essential causes of variation are the differences inherent in the germ borne by the individual, and not the experience or behaviour of the individual in the course of his career; the theory known as Orthogenesis, according to which there is a continual changing in a definite direction from generation to generation; and the neo-Lamarekian theory, according to which the cause of variation is the conscious effort of the individual, an effort passed on to descendants. Each of these theories may be true to the extent that it explains certain facts, but, there are two difficulties that no one of the theories, nor all together, can surmount. One of these is the fact that the development of exactly similar organs is found on quite distinct and widely separated lines of evolution. There is a striking example of this in the pecten, the common mollusc which we call the scallop, which has eyes, the structure of which is identical with that of the vertebrate eye in its minute details; yet the eye of the mollusc and the eye of the vertebrate must have been developed quite independently of one another, and ages after each had

left the parent stock. The other difficulty is that in all organic evolution an infinite complexity of structure is combined with an absolute simplicity of function. Thus the variation of an organ like the eye cannot be a single variation, but must involve the simultaneous occurrence of an infinite number of variations all coordinated to the single purpose of vision, which is a simple function. These are facts which can only be explained by the hypothesis of an original impulse retaining its direction in channels far removed and divided from their common source. This vital impulse is the theory which Bergson has expounded in *Creative Evolution*."

What Henri Bergson calls vital impulse, hypothetically is really the hand of God directing and controlling the course of nature. All who hold Him to be True and Intelligent must also believe that He may occasionally interfere too, that is, take greater steps than usual in His creation, the result being a more or less new creation. In short the ordinary account of the origin of species by continuous variations may be a true one so far as it goes, but it must not be forgotten that there is a Power at its back, without which it is inexplicable, and which may if it likes produce new forms at any moment.

Then there are difficulties about the time that seems required for the production of these highly complex and advanced forms of life from the simplest unicellular protists by mere chance and yet progressive variations. An inconceivably long time seems to be required—several thousand million years at the lowest estimate, and yet we do not come to the beginnings of life on this earth. For a long expanse of time seems also required for simple organic matter to evolve itself into these simplest forms of life, by mere natural processes supposing this possible. But physics seems unable to grant so much time for the possibility of organic life on this planet. Lord Kelvin showed that earth is a cooling body, and about a hundred million years ago the temperature of earth's surface must have been such that no organic life could possibly exist upon it. Darwin was himself sorely disconcerted on this account, and the difficulty has been agitating in scientific circles to the present day; possibilities of all kinds are ransacked to show that future investigations might reveal compensating features. Thus the discovery of radioactive substances have revived hopes that the earth may as well be a self-heating body as a self-cooling one. On the other hand the dynamical researches of Sir G. H. Darwin tend to show that the moon parted from the earth through a corridor of time about 56,000,000 years ago, and obviously the earth would be a glowing semi-fluid mass about this time.

(This is rather too low and the Professor is disposed to increase the time). Purely geological evidence seems to give an age of 27,000,000 years for stratified rocks, and Jolly, calculating on the salt deposited in sea water, estimates that about 90,000,000 years have elapsed since the earth became cool enough to allow water to collect, and hence life to begin, upon its surface.

Thus from whichever side we view it it appears that no more than 100,000,000 years have elapsed since life first arose on this planet. Surely there must be some causes or forces at the back of Nature which can hurry up the pace of evolution. Evolutionists are doing their best to restrict their demands upon time as much as possible but are hardly successful. One learned attempt to do so may be read in Dr. Bastian's 'Nature and Origin of Living Matter.' But unfortunately I am not aware of his having any supporters. I have not read anyone having even referred to his preposterous assertions. Might there not be a controlling agency at the back of Nature which directs its processes and occasionally works miracles upon it. Of course this does not prove the existence of that power, but if the existence of that power can be proved otherwise, and if it can be proved that it actually controls and interferes in the course of things in human matters, as we *claim* we daily observe in response to our prayers, *Istikhara* and the like, the action of that power in the creation of species becomes almost as probable as the creation of new varieties by the controlling-action of breeders, which, if the accounts of their efforts be lost to the world, would be regarded by future naturalists as merely due to some sort of natural selection. Even Joseph McCabe replying to Haeckel's critics says he has nothing to say against this form of Divine action.

To discuss the Darwinian hypothesis and its explanations of the wonderful phenomena of life and mind is clearly beyond my capacity, being so thoroughly ignorant of all the biological sciences. But when authorities are themselves very doubtful about certain things, as the nature and efficiency of causes invoked to explain the phenomena, one must be excused for refusing to follow the enthusiasts who would have us pass over all the difficulties, and only look to the things that apparently make a case for the hypothesis. Thus of Natural selection which is the universal panacea for explaining the diverse forms of life on earth, Dr. Bastian, himself a pronounced evolutionist, says:

"His (Darwin's) doctrine of natural selection relied in the main on the constant occurrence of minute individual variations in all directions

in the different representatives of species, some of which would be more and some less "useful" for their possessors in their struggle for existence—leading in this way, through repeated processes of multiplication and descent to the gradual extinction of those possessing the least useful qualities, and on the other hand, as Herbert Spencer termed it, to "Survival of the fittest."

"Some very fundamental objections have for a long time been raised against the adequacy of these particular views to account for the origin of new species, and such objections have been gathering weight during recent years. Thus it was contended even as far back as 1871 by St. George Mivart that among the minute individual variations which arise many would have no utility for the species, and that the incipient stages of a possibly useful variation could not be seized upon and developed by a process of "Natural Selection" so that these incipient variations would be liable to be swamped by crossing or to disappear by atavism.

"The American workers, Packard, Cope and Hyatt, have also dwelt upon the fact that natural selection is not a cause of variation. According to Packard, it comes in as a cause of the preservation or extinction of forms that have arisen in other ways. And as Cope says:—"A selection cannot be the cause of those alternatives from which it selects. The alternatives must be presented before selection can commence."

"Then, again, looking at the question from another point of view it has been said by J. T. Cunningham that the theory of Natural Selection is "only a theory of the origin of adaptations," while it is contended that "there is scarcely a single instance in which a specific character has been shown to be useful, to be adaptive."

The above extract from Dr. Bastian ought to keep within bounds the zeal of young men who are too apt to be carried away by admiration for these great men and imagine that everything has really been explained and accounted for in a simple natural way; there is no need for and so no room for Divine action in any form or manner whatever. As de Vries (quoted by our author) says, such a process "does not lead, by even the sharpest persistent selection, to any real transgression of the limits of species, much less to the origin of new and constant attributes."

Again it has been seriously questioned whether there is really so much struggle for existence in nature as would enable whole species—all transitional forms—to become extinct, that any variation could give one variety such a distinct advantage over the rest in the matter of food

supply &c. as to supplant the others so completely. One or two instances will suffice. The tigers are now all tawny. It is supposed the ancestors of tigers were originally of all colours. But the tawny-coloured ones got more prey, as their victims were unable to notice them very easily in the jungles. So all the tigers of other colours were gradually eliminated out of existence. So the bellies of fishes, crocodiles &c. are usually white. It is supposed that originally the colours were all indifferent. Sometime it so happened by chance that some fish or fishes were born with a wholly or partly white belly. This gave them an advantage over the other fishes that had bellies of other colours in that they were invisible to the little fishes deep down in the waters, and so they could prey upon them more successfully than the others who could be easily seen and avoided by these small fishes. Thus the latter gradually died from starvation, and the race of white bellied fishes only survived. It is needless to say one word on explanations like these.

Yet this Natural Selection is professed to be able to account not only for the infinite diversities of animal and plant forms on earth, their exquisite shapes and colours, and their wonderful adaptations such as those classed under the significant name of mimicry, but is also extended to explain the most wonderful, highly adaptive instincts of animals, of which hundreds and thousands might be read of in any book of Natural History. "The Yucca moth, for example, lays its eggs on the ovules of the Yucca flower and then carefully fertilizes the pistil with pollen, the result being that the seeds form the food of the larva, but the eggs are laid on fewer ovules than are fertilised, so that provision is thereby made that all the seeds shall not be destroyed by the larvae. The Yucca plant is dependent on this moth for the fertilization of its flowers, and the single performance of this act accomplishes the life-purpose of this moth. The insect acts as though it knew that its larvae would require ripe seed of the Yucca, as though it knew that this could only be obtained by fertilization, as though it knew that ripe seed is also necessary for the continuance of the existence of Yucca plants, and therefore for the activity of Yucca moths, and yet it is manifestly impossible that it can possess this knowledge much less acquire it in any intelligible sense of the word knowledge."

Darwin was fully alive to this difficulty and frankly confessed that if suitable explanations could not be forthcoming the phenomena of instincts would be sufficient to upset his whole theory. But have any sufficient explanations been ever forthcoming? Those who study the writings of evolutionist writers with an unbiased and not prepossessed

mind will be most competent to reply. The usual explanation that instinct is lapsed intelligence—instinctive actions are habitual actions that have become automatic in the long course of generations. "It seems to us that bees are really intelligent, that their instincts have arisen in an active attention to an intelligent purpose, but that their actions have become by long-continued habit and inherited characteristics automatic and unconscions." But through how many generations must a complicated course of action be regularly performed that it may become as it were organised in the mental structure of the animal so that it would act only in one way and not another? The cuckoo is remarkable for its singular and somewhat anomalous habit of depositing its eggs in the nests of other birds. Taking advantage of the absence of its dupe it deposits its eggs among the rest, abandoning it to the care of the foster-parent. The instincts of the little insects, ants and bees, have ever excited the admiration of men from immemorial times. But there is but one explanation—natural selection. How can actions that are performed, not constantly but only once or twice in a year, become habitual even for an individual, much less be transmitted to the race by heredity?

And on these remarkable habits some of the remarkable peculiarities of structure are said to be based. Thus Haeckel considers that the asymmetrical shapes of flat-fishes such as soles, flounders and turbot, are results of changes acquired through many generations owing to their habit of lying on one side at the bottom of the sea. Has the shape taken been really formed by the habit? has not the habit been rather forced on the fishes because of the shape that has developed somehow? So Cunningham cites the case of another fish, *Anableps*, which as he says "does not wear spectacles, but actually has its eyes made in two parts, the upper half of lens having a different curvature from that of the lower. The pupil is also divided into two by prolongations from the iris." And the explanation of this remarkable condition is said to be the fact that "this fish is in the habit of swimming at the surface with its eyes half out of the water, and the upper half of the eye is adapted for vision in the air, the lower half for vision under water." "There is no reason," he says, to suppose "that the required variations ever occurred until the ancestors of *Anableps* took to swimming with their eyes half out of water." Such are the explanations with which we are fed in the works of Evolutionist writers! Why unlike all other fishes should the *Anableps* set itself resolutely to swimming with eyes half out of water? The explanations of the Evolutionists are sometimes not less wonderful than the peculiarities they seek to explain. The hold they have on minds seems due merely to the fact

that they are so ingenious, and there is no other explanation in the field which can harmonise all the facts so admirably. This may be admitted; but it does not prove the hypothesis to be true in all its details.

I have not referred to de Vries' theory of mutation or *par saltum* variations, which has very few advocates and does not pretend to explain anything except the occasional appearance of new species or rather varieties of existing species by a sudden freak of nature. The theory is held out of court because the variations it counts upon, besides being exceptional, are not progressive changes, and so does nothing to expound the basic idea of evolution.

"According to the Mutation theory species have not originated by gradual selection continued through hundreds or thousands of years, but by sudden steps, even if the changes are very small. Unlike the variations which are progressive changes in a straight line, those metamorphoses which are designated as mutation branch off in new directions. Furthermore, so far as experience goes, they occur at random—that is in the most diverse directions." It must be explained that the sudden variations, of which any evidence is procurable, are only small variations which can produce only varieties at the best. These must, as Darwin thought, be unable to maintain themselves against swamping effects of intercrossing with the normal form. The only instances of perpetuation have been under domestication when, as in the case of Ancon sheep, the breeder got a fancy for the new type and carefully isolated them—in fact killed all the others to prevent dilution. But where are the conditions for isolation in a state of nature? This is by itself one of the great problems of evolution for which no satisfactory solution has yet been found. The difficulties are greater in this case, as the occurrence of such variations is very rare, and only a few individuals can be produced after long intervals. Atavism (reversion to the old type) may also nullify all the work in a short time, as in the case of normal variations. Moreover in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases will these sporadic variations be ill adapted to the conditions of existence and become extinct. Only a special providence can maintain a species (or rather) variety arisen in this way in a state of nature.

But it must be remarked that as we know nothing of these so-called sports of nature, it is after all possible that it may be a way of God in the creation of species—by working about changes, more or less serious in the germs of pre-existing species. Scientists seem after all to be

coming to the recognition of some unusual modes of the creation of species.

But it will be said that the Evolutionist position is no mere hypothesis. It has three sets of evidences to support it (1) The anatomical. The structure of man's body closely resembles that of the anthropoid apes and could easily be evolved from it in the course of ages by slow progressive variations. The similarity extends to minute physiological details. Thus the blood of man mixed with that of some anthropoid apes has no poisonous effect on the latter, while it has on that of other animals, including apes far removed from manlike structure. Why, it is asked, should God have cared to make man so closely resembling apes, if He had really created him in a non-natural way? So the various classes can be derived from each other by slow variations, and there is evidence of the reality of such modifications in the existence of rudimentary organs which have become atrophied by disuse in the succeeding forms. (2) The paleontological. The remains of animals found in different layers of earth's surface, arranged according to their geological epochs, show progressive forms of life increasing in complexity of structure. Apes come at the end of the series, and man appears last of all. This creates a strong presumption if not proof of the higher forms being derived gradually from the lower. (3) The embryological. Man and other animals in the course of their embryonic development pass through a number of forms very strikingly similar to some of the animal forms that are presumed to be older owing to their being simpler in structure. This has been erected into a law, called biogenetic law by Haeckel according to which animals in the course of their embryonic development pass rapidly through the forms of their ancestors.

On these so-called evidences (which are only evidences in the sense of being readily accountable on the doctrine of evolution and being difficult to account for otherwise) it has to be observed that the first which is the most striking is inconclusive, the second is obscure and contradictory, the third is contested and is probably very much exaggerated.

As to the anatomical evidence it has to be observed that in so far as it relates to the close anatomical resemblance between man and the anthropoid apes, it tells more in favour of special creation, or providence theory, than in favour of the ordinary modification view of the Evolutionists. If the things in which man differs from the apes could be shown to be due to the ordinary chance variation, changed conditions of life, use and disuse, and the like, it could plausibly have been urged in evidence of

the evolution theory. But it appears that he has come to differ from them in a particular set of minute things which while they seem to have no connection with changed modes of life are very distinctly purposive—all having tendency to make him the Lord of creation that he is. These are :—

(1) The greater size and weight of brain in proportion to the body. The highest anthropoid ape the gorilla has twice the weight of a man's body but his brain is only half so heavy. Along with this there is greater development of the phenomena, the chief centres of the higher psychic faculties—the association of impressions, the formation of ideas and concepts, induction and deduction. These things give man greater capacity for thought, concentration of mind, and for the higher abstract ideas.

(2) The adaptation of vocal apparatus to articulate speech. The importance of this can hardly be exaggerated. As Huxley says, "a man born dumb, notwithstanding his great cerebral mass and his inheritance of strong intellectual instincts, would be capable of few higher intellectual manifestations than an Orang or a Chimpanzee, if he were confined to the society of dumb associates."

(3) The clearing of his body of hair. This gives him a wide field for tactile perceptions, and hence greater means for knowledge of the external world. Along with this the body gets a keener sensibility, owing to delicate nerve-endings, and many parts acquire an erotic sensibility which is the chief factor in the production of soft and tender emotions and the creation of interest in life. It is remarkable that while in man the hair have fallen off from the body generally they have developed in certain parts, where while they seem to be least called for natural life, they seem meant to serve for higher aesthetic developments. The beard and moustache are meant to indicate the sex when man should cover himself up with clothing for decency—at least his lower parts as he is required to do in religion. The hair on the lower parts seem meant to counteract the evil effects of increased erotic sensibility, and is particularly useful in savage life when there is no regard to decency.

(4) The great longevity of man. The average longevity of man may be fixed at 80 years. Many come up to a hundred and not a few have been known to cross that popular limit of longevity. This is the highest age recorded of any animals throughout the whole mammal class, and is at least four times that of his supposed relatives, the apes. Man is not even sexually mature at the age at which the gorilla and other apes

would be drooping with age. The conditions affecting longevity in animals are very obscure, but here is a physiological fact depending no doubt on constitution, that is, the relative proportion of various vital organs to the body as a whole. This means that the variations in anatomical structure have been just such as to give man a greater lease of life, leading to a rich accumulation of individual experience.

So many differences all tending towards higher character and functions of life can hardly be considered to be due to mere chance variations or those depending on changes in life conditions. They show rather that the variations have been designed by a breeder with a distinct purpose in view, if the differences have really been brought about by gradual modification from the apes or their ancestors.

As regards the nervous system in man it may also be urged that though science is not yet able to detect the difference, yet there is surely something peculiar about it which makes man susceptible to higher spiritualistic influences (such as telepathy, clairvoyance &c) and makes peculiarly endowed people sensitive to odic light and other peculiar phenomena of the spiritualists. That these things have some reality cannot be denied by any man in the present day.

So far as regards man—as regards animals generally the indications of a directive agency controlling evolution (if the animals have really been created that way) have been given in the passage cited from Prof. Wildon Carr above.

But all this is unnecessary for our purpose. Here we are concerned merely with showing that with the anatomical evidence is inconclusive. Granting that the mutual structural likeness of animals from the highest to the lowest can be explained by gradual modifications from the one to the other, the same sort of likeness might be found if God had created each kind of animal separately by a special act of creation. It is only our ignorance of His design in creation that makes us wonder why if there were special acts of creation the animals created should be so remarkably like one another. All creatures are created as much for the sake of others as far themselves. It is an erroneous view to suppose, as is generally done by biologists, that every plant and animal is an end to itself and not to others. Altruism is embedded in the very design of creation. Now it is clear that unless there were some community in nature one animal could not serve the needs of another. How could man turn the horse, the ox, the camel to his use if, to say nothing of their bodies, there was nothing common in their minds so that one could understand the other. Community of mind involves homology in physi-

cal structure as mind depends on physical organization. Without that there would be no common feelings, not even a common view of the external world.

As regards the uses to which animals can be put it is clear that many depend on similarity of their organizations. What would become of glandular therapy if animals had no glands similar to ours. How could there be grafting experiments at all, which have been so successful and promise so much in future, if the structure of the ape was not very similar to man's.

Also the purpose of creation requires to be understood in a higher sense, so as to include what is called struggle for existence. The bear, the tiger exist to be fought and killed, for therein consists the possibility of man's self-development which is the very design of creation. This struggle for existence is held to be a necessary evil of this miserable world of ours, incompatible with the providential control of an All-Merciful God. But it is really the thing that gives all its worth to life and all the meaning to moral development. It also shows that the frightful problem of evil has no existence. But for unfavourable conditions—*internal and external*—there would be no attempt to remedy them, and there is nothing really great, really worth admiring in moral and intellectual life, but this attempt to resist and overcome evil.

Think of a creation with these principles in view, and it would be found to be substantially agreeing with that which is before us. We can therefore give not only a very definite, but in fact an unlimited amount of reply to the question, why should God have cared to make man so closely resembling apes if He really chose to create him by a special act of creation.

As regards the paleontological evidence it may be said that the evidence is equally inconclusive, besides being uncertain and contradictory. Fossils may serve the Evolutionists in two ways. (1) They may show that simpler forms of life have preceded the appearance of more complex and developed types of animals on this earth. (2) They may show some of the transitional forms between the existing species. Both are inconclusive. The first is a harmless proposition being equally necessary on the vital impulse theory of Henry Bergson. It would also be true on creation by providential directive force which we maintain. The second may be more to the point for Evolutionists; but it really proves nothing. It only shows there have existed species having some characters common to this and some common to that species. But as Prof. Sedgewick says (*Enc. Britt art Embryology*.) "These (fossil remains) are so imperfect

as to be practically useless for the present requirements. Moreover, if they were perfectly preserved, there would be no evidence to show that they were ancestors of the animals which have become extinct and left no descendants."

But the fossil evidence seems sometimes to tell something very decidedly against the evolutionist theory. Thus Volger (cited in Ueberweg's system of Logic) says, "It is an undoubted fact that long before those fish-lizards existed, which have been looked upon as the prophetic forms out of which the pure fish and the pure lizard were afterwards developed there were pure lizard forms belonging to the highest groups of lizards. It is a fact that the *proteromassus* is a dactylopod and that it long preceded the first mixipods, *Nothosauri*, *Ichthyosauri* and *Plesiosauri*. These are facts which are not to be got over. It is also a fact that real mammals were actually in existence before those mixed forms, the *Ichthyosauri* which should be the prophetic composite typical forms of vertebrate animals, and from which by development combined with analysis mammals especially should be produced. The *Microleotes* of Plieminger in the Wurtenburg is as undoubted a fact as *Plagiolase* related to it and the other mammals of the Portland oolites. So long as these facts are not overthrown a theory which is founded on the ignorance of these facts cannot be accepted." Owing to these anomalous facts Volger has been driven to suppose an eternal periodic revolution of organic life on this earth.

Then there are facts about the persistent types of life on this earth. Thus Huxley says "Not only is it true that the general plan of construction of animals and plants has been the same in all recorded time as at present, but there are particular kinds of animals and plants which have existed throughout vast epochs, sometimes throughout the whole range of recorded time, with very little change. By reason of this persistency, the typical form of such a kind might be called a "persistent type" in contradistinction to those types which have appeared for but a short time in the course of the world's history. Examples of these persistent types are abundant enough in both the vegetable and animal kingdoms. The oldest group of plants with which we are acquainted is that of whose remains coal is constituted, and so far as they can be identified, the carboniferous plants are ferns or club mosses or coniferae, in many cases generically identical with those living.

" Among animals instances of the same kind may be found in every sub-kingdom. The *Globigerina* of the Atlantic soundings is identical with

that which occurs in the chalk ; and the casts of lower Siberian *Foraminifera*, which Ehrenburg has recently described, seem to indicate the existence at that remote period of forms singularly like those which now exist. Among the corals, the paleozoic *Tabulata* are constructed on precisely the same type as the modern millepores ; and if we turn to molluscs the most competent malacologists fail to discover any generic distinction between the *Crania*, *Lingula* and *Discinae* of the Siberian rocks and those which now live. Our existing *Nautilus* has its representative species in every formation from the oldest to the newest, and *Loligo*, the squid of modern seas, appears in the Lias, or at the bottom of the mesozoic series, in a form at most specifically different from its living congeners. In the great assemblage of annulose animals, the two highest classes, the insects and spider tribe, exhibit a wonderful persistency of type. The cockroaches of the carboniferous epoch are exceedingly similar to those which now run about in our coal-cellars ; and its locusts, termites, and dragon-flies are closely allied to the members of the same groups which now chirrup about our fields, undermine our houses, or sail with swift grace about the banks of our sedgy pools. And, in like manner, the paleozoic scorpions can only be distinguished by the eye of the naturalist from the modern ones."

These are anomalous features of variation which, as Bastian says, have "hitherto proved a stumbling block to biologists and evolutionists alike." "This persistency is assumed by some to be due to the slow rate of change among the organisms, or to their having passed into a rigid (as opposed to a plastic) condition and they would have us believe that such organisms have been perpetuating their kind in an unbroken manner and in the same likeness through this long succession of geologic ages." He points out that some of these as the Foraminifera and Diatoms are extremely variable. It is indeed very wonderful that throughout the vast changes that must have occurred in all these geologic ages there occurred nothing in the life-conditions of these low creatures that could have enabled them to change into other and higher forms of life and those who know anything of the extreme modifiability of plants on the slightest change of conditions must be surprised that ferns have persisted with little change from the carboniferous ages to the present time.

The paleontological record, therefore, does not seem very much in support of the Evolutionist position.

It may also be remarked that so far as measures of time are concerned the geological clock is not always very certain. A good idea of

the vagueness of its time measures can be formed from the fact that the age of the primitive man whose skeleton was unearthed at La Chapelle Aux-Saints in France in 1908 has been estimated by different geologists at from twenty thousand to between two and three hundred thousand years ago. Very often the geologists have to depend on the fossils for determining the age of the strata in which they are found. Thus, sometimes at least, the so-called Paleontological evidence becomes no better than an argument in a circle. Finally we would wish to recall the reader's attention to what was said before that Paleontology testifies in a remarkable way the truth of the tradition of Our Lord Jafarel-Sadique, which says very distinctly that for millions of years before the appearance of man the planet was peopled with various types of animals, and that, ages before the creation of our progenitor Adam, various man-like species were created and lived on this earth. Volger's theory of periodic revolutions of organic life on this earth is remarkably consistent with this tradition, though other theories are also not inconsistent.

As regards the so-called Embryological evidence it would be the height of presumption on my part to discuss it, being so thoroughly ignorant of embryology as of all the biological sciences. But when the greatest and most eminent Embryologists reject the popular Recapitulation theory it must be obvious to all that there is something obscure about the facts or doubtful about the interpretation. Among the rejectors of the theory may be mentioned such eminent men as His, Virchow, Kolliker, Oscar Hertwig, Ranke, Wasmann, Keibel and Hensen. Haeckel is constantly complaining of these men in his writings accusing some, as Virchow and Hertwig, of base motives for their opinions. The majority of investigators who engage themselves in an experimental study of the development of the embryo get to have a contempt for sweeping assertions of this kind. One of the most eminent of these is Dr. Driesch who, as Haeckel says, "affirms that all Darwinists have softening of the brain" and "that Darwinism is (like Hegel's philosophy) the delusion of a generation." Haeckel and his school retaliate on these men by ridiculing the "exact" methods of these investigators and decrying the value of their researches.

Such is the position of the Embryological evidence at the present day. From the heated state of the controversy one may suppose that there may be weakness somewhere on both sides, but since the workers on the "exact" methods make no assertions of any kind, they simply investigate; it is only Haeckel and his school who put forward preposterous hypotheses about the embryo passing through ancestral forms—it is obvious

that it is only this side that is weak and it is these men only who create a nuisance by throwing obstacles in the way of patient research and enquiry.

However, it is a fact that all animals in the course of their embryonic development pass through a number of transient forms having some remote resemblance in certain features to the adult forms of simpler, and hence presumably, older forms of life. The phenomenon is akin to, rather identical with the metamorphosis observed in certain insects and also in some other animals, as the frog, in the intermediate (called larval) stage of life. The Evolutionist explanation is, "the so-called Recapitulation theory which asserts that the embryonic history is a shortened recapitulation of ancestral history; or to use the language of modern zoology that the ontogeny or development of the individual contains an abbreviated record of the phylogeny or development of the race." The way in which this is worked out is as puerile as it is searching and learned. All animals begin their existence with the fertilization of mother's egg (ovum) which is a simple cell (excluding the inert yolk which serves for the food of the embryo). There are in existence some unicellular organisms called protozoa and *therefore* all animals are lineal descendants of unicellular organisms like protozoa. When the ovum has been fertilized it divides and subdivides until we have a cluster of cohering cells which join together to form a round (at first globular) embryonic sphere (*blastula*); they then form into two very different groups and arrange themselves in two separate strata—the two primary germinal layers. These enclose a digestive cavity, the primitive gut with an opening—the primitive mouth. Now there are still to-day some organisms that remain throughout at the structural stage of the blastula—hollow vesicles that swim about by ciliary movement in the water, the wall of which is composed of a single layer of cells such as the volvox, the magosphaera, synura &c. and there are found others, named the gastræds, like the simplest sponges and polyps whose body remains at the two-layer stage throughout life, the outer or animal layer acts simply as a covering for the body and accomplishes its movement and sensation and the inner or vegetative layer of cells acts throughout life as a gut lining or nutritive layer of enteric cells, and often also yields the reproductive cells. These low forms of life *therefore* represent our earliest ancestors at the multicellular stage of our ancestry. The next stage is the formation of a third layer (Mesoderm) by the growth inwards of two pouches or folds of the skin. The pouches blend together and form a single cavity (the body cavity) and its two walls are

two fresh "germinal layers." This is the intermediate stage of the chordula, the embryonic reproduction of the ancient, typical, unarticulated worm-like form which has an axial chorda between the dorsal nerve tube and the ventral gut tube. There are such worms existing at the present day. It must be pointed out, however, that the typical forms here traced out are not so very alike in all animals and the identity has been established by a great deal of morphological reduction to common type—no easy task surely.

So far at least, the reader will agree with me, the evidence is at its best whimsical, and so, at least in this extended form, it is held by the highest authorities to be unjustifiable. "The Recapitulation theory must be given up," says Prof. Sedgewick writing on Embryology in the Ency. Britt. But it is forced on Haeckel because of its logical necessity, for if the passing through ancestral stages is due to any property inherent in germ cells it must show itself from the beginning.

Later on the evidence seems to carry weight, but it also seems to break altogether, for the Recapitulation is often very much blurred, and whole stages of ancestral history are often lost. They are explained away, however, as cenogenetic—due to changes in embryonic conditions. We must follow the evidence, however, as it is given.

From these four layers the various organs of the body are developed, and in the course of the development the remarkable phenomenon is observed—the temporary assumption by certain organs of the embryo of stages of structure which are permanent in other members of the same group. Thus "the embryos of the higher vertebrata (including man) possess in the structure of the pharynx and of the heart and vascular system certain features—namely, paired pharyngeal apertures, a simple tubular heart, and a single ventral-aorta giving off right and left a number of branches which pass between the pharyngeal apertures—which permanently characterise these organs in fishes. The skeleton largely bony in the adult, passes through a stage in which it is entirely without bone and consists mainly of cartilage—the form which it permanently possesses in certain fishes. Further the vertebrate embryo possesses for a time a notochord, a segmented muscular system, a continuity between the pericardium and the posterior part of the perivisceral cavity—all features which characterise certain groups of pisces in the adult state." It may be added that the human embryo has a tail which continues to a very late stage of his embryonic development.

All this is significant enough. But it can only serve the Evolutionist position if there is no other way of accounting for them. It is well-known

that His explained all these on direct and simple physical lines by reducing them to elasticity, bending, folding of the embryonic layers. The explanations no doubt lacked in due appreciation of the highly complex and welnigh inscrutable vital forces involved in the processes, but they indicated the conditions which must undoubtedly have a hand in directing the growth motions of the dividing cells. We can easily see the validity of this way of explanation by taking a simple case into consideration. The tadpole changes into a frog by losing its gills and oar-like tail and getting the four limbs in stead. Now it has been pointed out that "from a very early period of the tadpole's existence there are lungs which even now seem to be used as aids to respiration and as Dr. R. McDonnel has pointed out, as the anterior or forelegs of the tadpole in process of growth come forward they press on these gills, retarding by their presence the circulation through them and gradually prepare the way for, the more complete lung respiration of the adult forms." Consider that the animal is yet in the formative stage, the cells are rapidly changing their molecular structure, any slight action in one part cannot fail to have a marked effect on other parts and on the whole. The growth of different organs in the embryo cannot possibly proceed without metamorphosis—alteration or absorption of others. The studies in experimental embryology enable us to see this very clearly. The sole question is why the embryo has had a different class of organs at first before it takes on a new set of organs. Why, the existence of each set of organs at any time is determined by the vital functions of the different groups of cells and their inter-relations at different stages of their development. All organs cannot possibly be formed at once, those that are formed at any stage must necessitate a certain type of structure at that stage—the development must proceed by distinct steps. It cannot be a simple progressive growth. Every slight growth or differentiation must involve others with it, whether they are required for the final form or not. And these types of structure must be permanent in the adult forms in some other species. For the germs-cells which develop into these structures are practically the same and indistinguishable in all the animals. They have minnte differences in the molecular complexity of several elements in their nucleus, and these are held to be operative in determining the wonderful processes of development till the final form—that of the parent is arrived at. Well, these differences are on a basis of unity (due, no doubt, to similarity of structure in the various animals discussed previously, from which they are derived) and this unity must assert itself before the differences begin. The vital forces of development given to each germ-cell in different animals are different, and so their develop-

ment must be arrested at various stages of growth and the type of structure arrived at that stage must be permanent in those animals. The other animals who grow further must pass through these stages and in their case these types of structure will be transient.

These general principles help to explain the remarkable facts of embryonic and larval metamorphosis. Details are studied in the very recently developed science of the Physiology of Development. It is the same in plants; nobody supposes that the changes of form which the plant undergoes as it first emerges from the acorn tell anything of its ancestral history; in fact Haeckel is careful to explain why the Biogenetic Law is not recognized so much by the botanists as by the zoologists—yet changes occur and some of the earliest forms are remarkably like the adult forms of some lower classes of plants. It is thus pretty clear that the changes that are observed take place in the ordinary course of development, and have no necessary reference to ancestral history. Hence it is that in the embryo there are found not only those characters in which it resembles some animals, but also has often several features “which are not found in any animal whatsoever,” though, of course, no importance can be attached to these in the argument, for it will at once be said that it is not impossible to suppose they might have existed in a working animal. These instances are: “At a certain stage of development the central nervous system has the form of a groove in the skin, there is a communication at the hind end of the body between the neural and alimentary canals, the mouth aperture has at first the form of an elongated slit, the growing end of the Wolfian duct is in some groups continuous with the ectoderm and the retina is at one stage a portion of the wall of the medullary canal. In the embryos of the lower vertebrates many other instances of the same interesting character might be mentioned, for instances the presence of a coelomic sac close to the eye, of another in the jaw, and of a third near the ear (Elassmobranchs), the opening of the Mullerian duct into the front end of the Wolfian duct and the presence of an aperture of communication between the muscle-plate coelom and the nephridial coelom.”

Thus we see that even if species were created by special acts of creation the embryonic development of their generation would be much the same as we find in nature. Their germ-cells would have differences of molecular structure according to the varying complexity of their organs, and the rest will follow in due course. But we do not affirm all creation to be special creation in the ordinary sense of the word. Some creations may have been in the way analogous to Mutations of de Vries.

The logic of the Evolutionist argument has been well analyzed by Prof. Sedgewick in his article in the *Ency. Britt.* on Embryology. After showing that "when we come to look for the facts upon which it is based we find that they are non-existent, for the ancestors of all living animals are dead and we have no means of knowing what they were like," he says that the explanation "is purely deduction from the evolution theory. Indeed, it is even less than this, for all that can be said is something of this kind: if the evolution theory is true, then it is conceivable that the reason why the embryo of a bird passes through a stage in which its pharynx presents some resemblance to that of a fish is that a remote ancestor of the bird possessed a pharynx with lateral apertures such as are at present found in fishes." Indeed for the argument to be complete it is necessary to show that owing to some property of living matter (which must be rationally established) it is necessary for the germ-cells to pass in the course of their development through ancestral forms. It must be shown that the molecular structure of the different elements entering in the composition of the nucleus have reference to this ancestral history, as is so commonly assumed without a shadow of proof. But the thing is that what cannot be accomplished by reason can be accomplished by faith, and all these things are assumed as if they were self-evident truths. As a matter of fact there is a certain of indirect evidence that tells against these suppositions. It is well-known that the phenomena of regeneration of lost parts are closely akin to those of reproduction; the only difference is that in the former it is the somatic (body) cells instead of germ (reproductive) cells that are concerned. But the difference is not great. Thus referring to certain observations showing that "the changes witnessed in the development of cancerous tissue are identical with those occurring in the normal sexual reduction of the tissues both of animals and plants." Dr. Bastian says 'This change of certain connective tissue cells into cells of cancer representing an incipient conversion of them into the forms of germ-cells must be regarded as decidedly adverse to the views of Weismann as to the absolute distinction between the "somatic-cells" and the "germ-cells" and "continuity" of the latter. His views, moreover, seem negatived by multitudes of well-established facts concerning budding, "regeneration" and repair of injuries generally, to which we must now turn our attention. It would be tedious to cite the instances he has given. In the plants they are obvious and must be known to all. Among the animals the instance of the common polyps may be cited. "Not only has *Hydra* been cut in from two to twenty different pieces, but it has even been chopped up into innumerable fragments and yet each of these, under favourable cir-

cumstances was able to grow again into a complete animal." Of the planariae it is said "these animals respond to almost every mutilation by complete reconstruction, they may.....be cut transversely nine or ten pieces with the result that each of these pieces grows again to a whole animal." All these things show that regeneration is only another form of reproduction and there is no essential difference between the two vital processes. If the passing through ancestral forms in growth were a property of living matter generally there must have been found something of that kind in regeneration also. It is well-known that this has been looked out for, but the attempt has failed and no one professes anything of that kind.

All this is, however, a digression, but it may serve perhaps to elucidate the force of the word "conceivable" used by Prof. Sedgewick. Suppose we are unable to explain the changes in the development of the embryo, and on the Evolutionist hypothesis these changes become "conceivable" that does not prove the hypothesis to be true. It is only impatience after intelligibility that makes men insensible to the difference between a mere hypothesis and a proved reality.

Prof Sedgewick then shows that there is a further unwarrantable assumption involved—"that these pharyngeal apertures of the ancestral bird had the same respiratory function as the corresponding structures in modern fishes"—an assumption that "introduces a considerable amount of contentious matter." He examines the principle underlying the theory, namely that "the tendency has been for structures to persist in the embryo after they have been lost in the adult" and finds that "there is a certain amount of indirect evidence which is distinctly opposed to this view. As is well known living birds are without teeth, but it is generally assumed that their edentulous condition has been comparatively recently acquired and that they are descended from animals which at a time not very remote from the present, possessed teeth. Considering the resemblance of birds to other terrestrial vertebrates, and the fact that extinct birds, not greatly differing from birds now living are known to have had teeth, it must be allowed that there is some warrant for the assumption, yet in no single case has it been certainly shown that any trace of teeth has been developed in the embryo. The same remark applies to a large number of similar cases; for instance the reduced digits of the bird's hand and foot and the limbs of snakes. Moreover organs which are supposed to have become recently reduced and functionless in the adult are also reduced in the embryo, for instance digits 3 and 4 of the horse's foot, the bird limbs of whales." He allows, however, that there

are "some, though not many cases in which organs which were (*italics mine*) in an ancestral adult have persisted in the embryo of the modern form." His final conclusion is that a disappearing organ may be retained by the embryo if it is functional for it, as happens in the case of larval life, and then it may be impressed upon embryonic development if by some change the larval period is absorbed in the embryonic.

He also passes to "the consideration of another supposed law of embryology—the so-called law of Von Baer. This generalization is usually stated as follows: Embryos of different species of the same group are more alike than adult and the resemblances are greater the younger the embryo examined." This might appear natural for they belong to animals of "the same group" having certain similarity of structure. Nevertheless he finds it "open to serious criticism. If it were true, we should expect to find that embryos of closely similar species would be indistinguishable, but this is notoriously not the case. On the contrary they often differ more than do the adults, in support of which statement the embryos of the different species of peripatus may be referred to. The generalization undoubtedly had its origin in the fact that there is what may be called a family resemblance between embryos, but this resemblance, which is by no means exact, is purely superficial, and does not extend to anatomical detail. On the contrary, it may be fairly argued that in some cases embryos of widely dissimilar members of the same group present anatomical differences of a higher morphological value than do the adults (see Sedgewick *loc cit*), and as stated above, the embryos of closely allied animals are distinguishable at all stages of development, though the distinguishing features are not the same as those which distinguish the adults. To say that the development of the organism and of its component parts is a progress from the simple to the complex is to state a truism, but to state that it is also a progress from the general to the special is to go altogether beyond the facts. The bipinnaria larva of an echinoderm, the trochosphere larva of an annelid, the blastodermic vesicle of a mammal are all as highly specialized as their respective adults, but the specialization is for a different purpose and of a different kind to that which characterises the adult."

Thus the hold that the hypothesis of evolution has on minds is due neither to any great efficiency of the causes it relies upon, nor the intelligibility of the forces it assumes, nor to any cogent evidence in its favour, nor to congruity with the results of other sciences, but simply because it satisfies the intellect by excluding the supernatural, which apparently seems to break the continuity and mar the unity of nature, which is one

of its presuppositions. It presents to the mind the world as a fairly intelligible whole without having the necessity of rising to higher spiritual forces, whose very existence seems to break the continuity which it seeks to realise. Hence its resolution to pass from a science to a philosophy, the main tendency of which is to deny God and the higher powers generally, by making them unnecessary for an intelligible conception of the world. But this is impossible. We have seen that even in its lower, scientific aspect it has had only an indifferent success—and that too by resolutely suppressing much, even whole classes of phenomena, that do not yield to its explanations. As to its pretensions to philosophy every sensible man would repudiate them when it seeks to explain the origin of life, the origin of mind from dead matter, which we otherwise know is nothing but systems of corpuseles jostling about with varying degrees of motion. All its talk about "love and hate of elements," "the elements of feeling"—which are not feeling but under suitable conditions give rise to feeling must be held to be mere childish prattle. Even its attempts to explain the vital phenomena, the mechanism of heredity, the physiology of development are doomed to failure. In fact no explanation has even been attempted—there is only the affirmation that all these things are explainable somehow with the aid of the ordinary forces of Nature. Those who like Driesch say that "we are absolutely not able to understand development" are branded as Vitalists. Clearly when it comes to this it is useless to argue at all. They have a resolution to believe a thing and believe it resolutely, and there is the end to the matter.

I now close this inordinately long note which must no doubt be wearying to many of my readers, who may perhaps know nothing of the sciences involved in the discussion. I was driven to it not merely on account of the story of special creation of Adam, about which we know nothing, but also because the theory as ordinarily understood serves to create a presumption in minds against the hand of God in creation in any form whatsoever. Indeed, after Mill, it is supposed to weaken the force of the evidence of His Existence itself, by affecting the validity of the well known Design argument.

As to the creation of Adam, we repeat, we know nothing. We only know that it was some way a special creation and was not a descendant from the apes. The traditions make this very clear, though the details they furnish can only be followed in a general way. They relate how the figure of Adam was made first out of an "extract of clay" mixed with water, and how the angels infused physical (physiological) characters in it, and life or spirit of God was infused in it. We can only say that even if

the account be taken strictly literally there is nothing impossible in it—and that not merely on account of the Infinite power of God but because of properties of things known to science. Thus we know, not on theoretically but also practically (after Bastian), that not only living matter but living units of primitive kind can be manufactured out of inorganic matter. We know that energy in the form of light, temperature oxygenation, chemical condition of the medium is required for the development embryonic cells, particularly Herbst "has shown that all salts of the sea water are of great importance for development, and most of them specifically and typically; for instance calcium is absolutely necessary for holding together the embryonic cells, and without calcium all cells will fall apart, though they do not die, but live to develop further." Thus if all other conditions are suitable sea water can possibly synthesise groups of cells into organism. In fact there is nothing very strange; if we knew all the properties of living matter and the forces of its growth and development and could have command over them we could do it ourselves. "Mr. J. Bulter Burke (of Cambridge) has produced in the Cavendish laboratory tiny globules that seem to be half way between the living and the non-living. A French student, M. Dubois, has made a similar claim; and a distinguished German physicist Professor Ostwald has emphatically predicted the speedy creation of life in the laboratory." (J. McCabe.) Who can then affirm that the manufacture of a living body under the hands of angels is something very wonderful?

But we do not stick to the accounts quite literally. We have reasons to be sure that some parts or expressions were allegorical and meant to be understood in an allegorical sense. Thus the tradition cited in Qummi's Commentary (the oldest and most reliable of Shia Commentaries) begins with an account, manifestly allegorical, of predetermination as regards sinfulness or sinlessness. God took two handfuls of waters. To one He said 'From thee I will create pious unsinning beings' and to the other He said 'From thee I will create rebellious sinful creatures,' but made the reservation that His decree might be changed (*Bada*). This reservation was not made in the case of the first class. (This is distinctly said so in the tradition). Then the tradition says, the waters were mixed and extract (*Sulalat*) of earth mixed with it, from which the creation of Adam was made as described above. Who can doubt that this part at least of the tradition is allegorical? Moreover the Imam does not give it in the usual authoritative way, but says he got it from the preceding Imams which is generally held to be an indication that the previous Imams had certain special purpose in giving it in this form (as *e. g.* it may have been given allegorically, or it may have been stated in presence of some persons before whom it was only advisable to give the popular account without explaining the truth) and the Imam who rehearses it does not hold it to be full unqualified truth. In short such details can be considered to be more or less allegorical.

